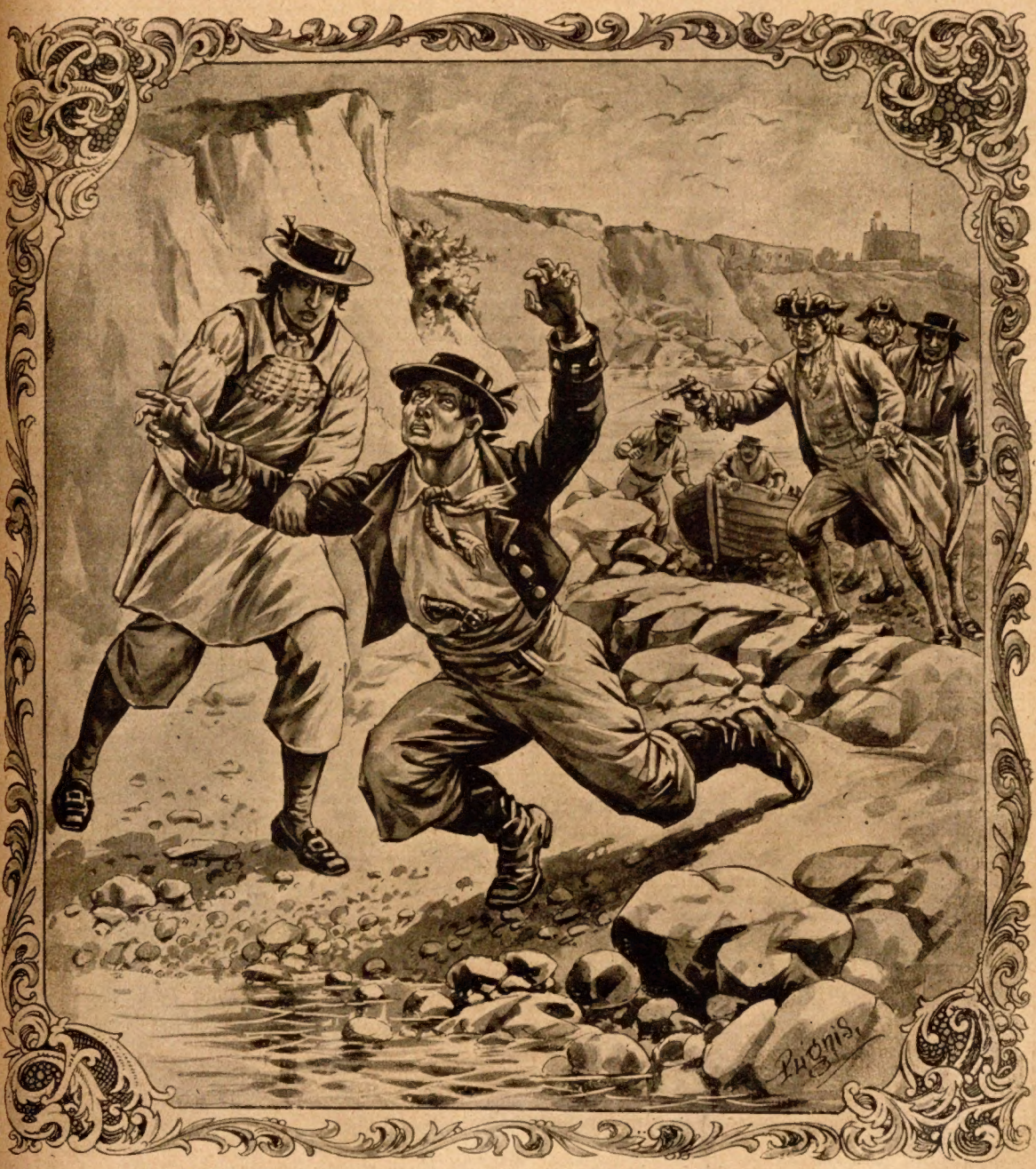
POLICE · BUDGET · EDITION

EDITED · BY HAROLD FURNISS

FAMOUS CRIMES

PAST AND PRESENT

ONE · PENNY



A COUPLE OF SHOTS AND LAUD LAY STRETCHED UPON THE SAND.

(See the Story of Margaret Catchpole).

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PART II.

"Can one love twice? Can you be ever loved
As Enoch was? What is it that you ask?
'I am content,' he answered, 'to be loved
A little after Enoch.'"

—TENNYSON, "Enoch Arden."

AFTER their day's work at the wash-tubs, the female prisoners used to be let out from eight until half-past eight for a breath of fresh air in the felons' yard. On March 19, 1800, Mr. Ripshaw had left with seven prisoners for Bury St. Edmunds. On Monday and Tuesday, the 24th and 25th, the wash had taken place. But the clothes-horses had not been left out, as usual, on the Tuesday night.

This was a sad disappointment, for Margaret had made up her mind to escape that very night. Could she be suspected? Had anybody betrayed her? No; it was impossible. As the turnkey passed the palings she cried out to him, "You have not put out the horses for us to-night!"

"No, Margaret," he replied; "we have all been too busy cleaning the cells and yards; but they shall be put out the first thing in the morning."

The reply was both satisfactory and unsatisfactory. It convinced her she was not suspected; but declared that she must expect no help from the linen-horses. She was glad, however, to see that the lines were on the posts for the coarse linen, and the crotches, or props, in their proper places.

She looked around for something to help her. The gaol was nearly twenty-two feet high, and the chevaux-de-frize three feet from the point of one revolving spike to its extreme point. What could she get to assist her? At one time she thought of pulling up a portion of the paling for a ladder. She tried her strength at it, but it was too much for her. She then turned her eye upon a large frame, which was used for the flower-beds. It covered a long bed; and the awning usually placed upon it, to keep the sun off the flowers in the summer, was not there. She tried her strength at this, and lifted the legs upon which it stood about a foot upwards. This she resolved to make her ladder. She looked up at the narrow spot, where the iron spike had been broken, and which was close to the shoulder or prop of the chevaux-de-frize. Hope beamed brightly upon her as she thought of her liberty. Margaret resolved to make the attempt at midnight. At half-past eight the convicts all went in to supper, and afterwards retired to their cells. But Margaret, the moment she reached hers, contrived to slip out of it again, with the things she had made for her disguise, into the adjoining one, which stood open; and she crept under the bed of the felon who was gone to Bury for trial. She had, as usual, closed her own door, and lay anxiously waiting in her hiding-place the turnkey's approach. She heard him coming along, and asking the several prisoners as he came if they were in their cells. When her name was called Margaret put her lips to the wall of the cell where she was, and heard the key turn in the lock. But imagine her surprise when the turnkey entered the very cell in which she lay concealed under the bed. He went up to the iron-barred window, and, as usual, the casement stood open to let fresh air through the passage. The turnkey soliloquised: "Ah, poor old Sarah! You will never sleep upon this bed again," meaning that Sarah was bound for the condemned cell after the judge had done with her. Margaret was afraid the turnkey would hear her breathe. Or he might lock her in! Not a bit of it; he just walked off and left the door open.

Nine o'clock, ten o'clock, eleven o'clock had all struck. Margaret now rose, took her shoes in her hand and her bundle under her arm. Cautiously down the stone steps leading to the felons' yard she crept. The door was unbolted. Every cell was locked; what need to lock the yard door? Silently she opened it. It creaked so little that the wind prevented any sound reaching beyond the precincts of the door. She made her way to the flower-stand in the governor's garden, lifted the frame out of the ground, and set it up endways directly under the broken spike. It reached a little more than half-way up the wall, being about thirteen feet long. She then went and took the linen line off the posts and made a running noose at one end of it. She then took the longest clothes-prop she could find, and passed the noose over the horn of it. Mounting the frame by the help of the prop, and standing upon it, she lifted the line up and passed the noose over the shoulder of the chevaux-de-frize; then, pulling it tight and close to the wall, it slipped down the iron and became fixed.

Now came the greatest difficulty she had ever overcome in her life. She drew herself up by the line to the top of the wall, and laying her body directly upon the roller where the spike was broken, with the help of one hand grasping the shoulder of the iron she balanced herself, until she had pulled up all the line, and let it fall down the other side of the wall; then, taking hold of the rope with both hands, she bent her body forward, and the whole row of spikes revolved, turning her literally heels over head on the outer side of the gaol-wall.

Just as she alighted on the earth St. Clement's chimes played for twelve o'clock. It was a gently sloping bank from the wall, and a dry fosse, which she crossed, and easily climbed over the low wooden palings against the road, and made her way for the lane against St. Helen's Church. There she found Will Laud in readiness to receive her, which he did with an ardour and devotion that told he was sincere.

They fled to an empty cart-shed on the Woodbridge Road. Here Laud kept watch at the entrance whilst Margaret put on her sailor's dress. She soon made her appearance on the road with her white trousers, hat, and blue jacket, looking completely like a British tar.

The couple got to their intended destination—namely, Will Laud's sister's home at Sudbourn. But there was a reward of fifty pounds for Margaret's apprehension. In spite of that, Mrs. Keeley, Will Laud's sister, was loyal to

The turnkey entered the very cell.

the fugitives, but the police used threats to the poor woman, and she blurted out that Margaret and her brother were down on the coast, waiting for a boat to carry them to sea; she even confessed that Margaret slept with her only the night before, and that a report having reached them of a reward offered for her capture, she had put a smock-frock over her

sailor's jacket, and was assisting Keeley, her husband, in keeping his flock upon the marsh saltings.

The constable of Sudbourn and Mr. Ripshaw went off immediately for the saltings. They met Keeley, the shepherd, returning with his flock, to fold them upon the fallows; but no one was with him. He was a shrewd, sharp, surly fellow, and in a moment understood what was in the wind.

Mr. Ripshaw began the attack. "Constable, take that man into custody."

"Where's your warrant, Mr. Gaoler? 'Old birds are not to be caught with chaff.' Now then, your warrant for my apprehension, and I am the man to go with you. Come, show me the warrant at once, or you no sooner lift your hand against me than I will show you what resistance is, and you shall take the consequences of an assault upon my person."

The fellow stood with his brawny limbs displayed before them, and his two fierce, rough-coated, short, flap-eared dogs wagging their stumps of tails, and looking earnestly in their master's face, to see if he gave the signal for them to attack either or both the gaoler and the constable. It was clear that they must go upon another tack.

The shepherd gave a shrill whistle to his dogs, and on they dashed, driving the sheep towards the fold.

The gaoler and the constable proceeded directly along the shingled hard to the beach, or rather to the shore of the riverside, which in those parts much resembles the seashore. The revenue cutter's boat was then going across the stream of the Alde; they hailed it, and the officer in command ordered his men to return.

It was young Barry who came on shore from the boat, and he immediately walked a little way apart with the gaoler, who explained to him the nature of his business, and painful as its connection with Margaret Catchpole made it to Barry, his sense of duty compelled him to render the assistance required. Accordingly, they were soon seated in the stern of the boat, and were rowed by his men towards the spot where, on the main shore, Laud and Margaret stood, anxiously watching the approach of a boat from a vessel on the sea.

There they stood, not only unconscious of approaching danger, but congratulating themselves upon the prospect of a termination of all their troubles. Joyfully did they watch the boat coming over the billows of the sea, not seeing the other boat approaching them from the river. A few minutes more and they would have been clear.

A couple of shots, and Laud lay stretched upon the sand, shot clean through the heart!

Margaret and her dead lover were taken to the Ship Inn at Orford, whence Margaret was taken to solitary confinement in Ipswich Gaol.

Second Trial, and Second Time Condemned to Death.

Before we go any further we must call attention to the present state of things. Policemen are ordered to refrain from asking prisoners any questions whatever. Listen to these Suffolk Solons.

After the arrival of Margaret at the Ipswich gaol, several magistrates attended, at the request of Mr. Ripshaw, to take the deposition of the prisoner. She was summoned into the gaoler's parlour, or, as it was more properly called, the "Magistrates' Room." The depositions of Mr. Ripshaw and of the constable of Sudbourn were first taken down. The nature of the offence was then for the first time explained to Margaret and its most dreadful consequences at once exposed. She was taken completely by surprise. She had no idea that, in doing as she had done, she had been guilty of anything worthy of death, and made no hesitation in telling the magistrates so. She told them, moreover, that her conscience did not accuse her of any crime in the attempt, and that she thought it a cruel and bloody law which could condemn her to death for such an act.

"But are you aware," said Mr. Gibson, one of the visiting magistrates, "that you have broken that confidence with Mr. Ripshaw which he placed in you, and that you subjected him and his sureties to the penalty of five hundred pounds each, had he not recovered you and brought you back to prison?"

"Had I been aware of such a thing I should then have thought myself as bad as if I had stolen the money, and should, indeed, have broken the confidence which, with such a knowledge, would have been placed in me. But I knew nothing of such a fact. My master, Mr. Ripshaw, was always kind and indulgent to me, and my mistress the same, but they never hinted such a thing to me. I was not aware that, with regard to my personal liberty, there was any bond of mutual obligation between me and my master. I was always locked up at the usual time, and it never was said to me, 'Margaret, I will rely upon your honour that you will never attempt to escape.' No promise was extracted from me, and I did not think that it was any breach of confidence to do as I have done."

Cautiously down the steps she crept.

"You do not consider that you might have ruined an innocent man, that the turnkey was actually committed upon suspicion of having connived at your departure, as nobody would believe that you could have done such an act of your own accord."

"I might not have done it of my own accord, though I certainly did it without the assistance of any human being. He, alas! is dead who persuaded me to do it, though I confess it did not require any very great degree of persuasion; and I fear that, were he living now, I should almost attempt the same again."

"There you speak contemptuously, and in a very unbecoming manner, young woman."

"I did not mean to be disrespectful to you, gentlemen, especially as you are so kind as to explain to me the nature of the law. I only meant to express my own weakness. But may I ask what law it is that makes the act I have been guilty of so felonious as to deserve death?"

"You may ask any question you please, but you must not add defiance to your impropriety and guilt. You are sensible enough to be well assured that the magistrates here present are not your judges. They have a duty to perform to their country, and they consider it a privilege and an honour that their sovereign places them in the situation of such active service as to send prisoners before the judge, that such as transgress the laws, and render themselves unfit to enjoy rational liberty, should be punished, as men not worthy to be members of a well-organised and civilised community. By the law of the land you live in, you have once been condemned to death for horse-stealing. By the mercy of your King you have had a reprieve, and a commutation of that sentence of death for transportation for seven years. The period you have spent in gaol is part of that sentence. Now understand the law.

"'Any prisoner breaking out of gaol, if he resist his gaoler, may be killed on the spot, in the attempt of the gaoler to restrain him. And any person breaking out after sentence of death shall be considered liable to that punishment for his original offence, which had been commuted, and shall suffer death accordingly. If he escape through the door of his prison when left open it shall not be felony, because it is the negligence of the gaoler; but if he break out, after proper caution exercised for his security, either by force in the day or by subtlety in the night, then it shall be felony.'

"Such is the law; and though, in your case, young woman, you may not consider it just, yet when you reflect upon your example to others, you will see it in a different light. If every prisoner should go unpunished who broke out of prison, what continual attempts would be made to escape! I am truly sorry for your case; but the law is made for offenders, and it is our duty to send you to Bury again for trial. In the meantime, the gaoler will be upon the alert, and take good care that you do not commit the same offence again."

Margaret thanked Mr. Gibson for his explanation. She felt very sorry, she said, if she had offended anyone, and hoped they would forgive her ignorance and unintentional offence.

She was fully committed to take her trial for the second offence.

There is no such thing as being "fully committed for trial." That is the language of game-preserving magis-

THEY FLED TO AN EMPTY CART SHED.

trates, and garotters speak of their friends as being "fullied." It is unconstitutional to try and prejudice a British jury.

It is the fashion with some people to say of those whom they dislike: "They don't deserve to live." The present writer says of the Suffolk magistrates of A.D. 1800 that it would be a fitting punishment for them could they be made again to live for twenty-four hours on this earth! They would see how all their idols have been shattered by a more enlightened age. They wouldn't like it.

Margaret had a visit from Mrs. Cobbold, who talked to her of the rights of property. Are we not insulting ourselves by admitting that such fiends in human form are descended from the same Adam and Eve as we are? Of the same passions as ourselves they certainly are not. It makes one's blood boil to read the letter which that she-devil wrote to Margaret. There is something in heredity, for the Rev. Richard Cobbold admired the letter. Here is the precious screed, and the writer's son exclaims: "How instructive are the minutes of her progress which that lady made during that most engaging period! And how blessedly employed was the enlightened mistress in communicating light to her poor benighted servant! It was now that she made amends in her own heart for that too common error among all who exercise power and authority—the neglect of the spiritual welfare of their dependents. She applied her powerful faculties to the strengthening and refreshing of her servant's mind by humbling herself with her before God. And well was she repaid for this exertion. Abundant was the reward to herself in obtaining that experience in the ways of godliness, which strengthened her own faith and increased her charity:

"Cliff, Ipswich, August 1, 1800.

"MARGARET,—I cannot come and see you, as I had intended this day to have done, having been so unfortunate as to sprain my ankle in getting out of my carriage on to the stone step at the Cliff. But I am so full of thought about you that my painful foot shall not prevent my willing hand writing to you a few words before you depart. It may be good for you and me that this accident has occurred, however much it may seem our present privation. It may teach us that we never can command events nor tell what a day may bring forth. It may so happen that this letter may do you more good than my visit; if so, I shall not regret the pain I suffer, since I shall have the consolation of its seeming evil being productive of some good. Oh, how I wish that we could look upon all events in the same manner, and be persuaded that all things 'work together for good to them that love God'! Let us (*i.e.*, you and I) be thus persuaded. It will prevent us experiencing any present mortification in the impossibility of our seeing each other at this time.

"I would first speak to you about your conduct at the trial; and my pen does that which my tongue would do. Do not attempt in any way to defend your conduct. Being fully convinced, by God's grace, of the criminality of your act and deed, let no legal sophistry whatever induce you to plead not guilty. In a court of justice you should stand before man in the same way as you would before your Maker, without any covert deceit, any desire to make a bad cause appear a good one.

"Satan is sometimes transformed into an angel of light. He is so eloquent, so engaging, so bold, so devoted, so persuasive, that a lie comes from him with such apparent grace that the sons of God are almost deceived by his

transformations. But let not anyone persuade you to take advantage of his services. Truth, Margaret, needs no fictions to defend it; for, 'whatsoever loveth and maketh a lie' shall never enter into the city of truth. So do not suffer anyone who calls himself your friend to persuade you to trust to fallacies. You know yourself guilty. Conduct yourself as a person conscious of your guilt before God and man. I shall not deceive you. The penalty of your crime is death; and you do not forget the argument that I used upon a former occasion, 'that if a man owns himself justly condemned to suffer death, and has mercy shown to him by giving him a lesser punishment, his duty is to suffer that lesser punishment with the same resignation as he would death. And if he fail in this duty, he justly deserves the former punishment.' So do you justly deserve sentence of death for your present or late sin. And you will be condemned to die!

"Be prepared for much severity at the hands of your offended judge. I say, be prepared; for, unless he should know as much of you as I do, he will think you one of

"I will show you what resistance is!"

the worst persons alive, and therefore only fit to be made a public example of by a violent death. I know you, however, Margaret, and though I believe that if you were now restored to liberty you would be a Christian servant, and never more be a guilty slave of sin, yet your judge cannot know this. Indeed, scarcely any of the magistrates know this. It is, therefore, best to be prepared for a severe trial. Do not attempt to call anyone to speak to your character. It will be of no use. The representations made by the magistrates at the last assizes will be sufficient testimony up to that time; and since then you cannot say that you deserve any defence. You must not expect any mercy, but prepare yourself not only to receive sentence of death, but prepare yourself to die.

"If a prisoner who knows himself to be guilty does not prepare himself to die before the sentence of death is passed upon him, his is a very dangerous state, since the period is so short between condemnation and execution that he must be very much distracted.

"You have read through 'The Christian's Consolations against the Fears of Death,' and you tell me that your mind has been greatly strengthened by the piety expressed in this good old book. I agree with you that it touches upon every source of consolation which a Christian man can contemplate. It meets almost every case. But it does not exactly contemplate a female convict, like yourself; and on this account I would add a very few words of advice to you upon this subject.

"To die a Christian, and as a Christian ought to die, is to have no desire whatever but for the kingdom of God. You suffer justly for your crimes; and you must not let anyone deceive you into any false idea of your own worthiness to live. The penitent malefactor on the tree rebuked the boldness of his brother who railed upon the Saviour of the world, and used these words of reproof, 'Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed suffer justly; but this man hath done nothing amiss.' Then he prefers that humble prayer, which should ever be yours, Margaret, up to your latest moment: 'Lord, remember me when thou comest into Thy kingdom.' How infinite in mercy is the Lord! How loving! how pitiful! how generous! to the poor wretch at the moment of his late repentance! We cannot tell, Margaret, how late that repentance was. He might have been convinced of his guilt long before he was lifted up to die. In prison he might have heard, as you have done, of the great, the good, the only Christ. So that men do wrong to take even this example for the success of a deathbed repentance at the last hour. We cannot tell when our last hour may be. Our first should be one of repentance as well as our last. And the whole desire of our lives should be to be remembered in the kingdom of Christ. The blessed words of our Saviour must have taken away the sting of death from the faithful heart of the penitent: 'This day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.'

"I conceive that we are justified in taking these words to our own selves in our contemplation of death, and in considering them as the most blessed words that can be used to destroy the power which the king of terrors often raises in the minds of weak and sinful mortals. If you are truly penitent, justly sensible of all your sins, and fully convinced of the meritorious sacrifice which God made for your sins, and those of the whole world, I see no reason why your faith should not be so fully fixed on these blessed words as to let them be the hope of your heart. It is almost impossible for the true penitent to beg to be remembered in the kingdom of Christ without experiencing comfort from the Saviour's words—'This day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.'

"Death frees us from the dominion of sin; that is, if we die in Christ. We are then with Him in paradise, in that state of innocency in which Adam was before he was driven out of the Garden of Eden. Our spirits know no fear, since we are in love; and 'perfect love casts out fear, because fear hath torment.'

"Your judge, Margaret, will probably tell you to make good use of the short time you have to live. I not only tell you this, that you may be fortified against your sentence of death, but that you may prepare yourself for entering upon another and a better life. I am glad to find, by my friend the chaplain, that you have diligently applied your whole strength to the word of God, and have found how weak, how wicked, how lost you have been all the days of your life. I hope to be able to come and see you, with him, after your return from Bury, and to partake with you of spiritual refreshment. Till then, my poor servant, I can only pray that you may be rich in grace, strong in faith, humble in heart, devout in prayer, lowly and contrite in spirit, watchful against all temptation, in love, in peace, in charity with all, praying for all—for your judge, jury, and fellow-prisoners.

"Oh, that your end may be as you wish it—a warning to all your sex, and especially to those in your situation of life, never to let passion get the upper hand of virtuous principle! That God may fortify you with his spirit, cheer you with His word, and comfort in death, is the earnest prayer of your former mistress and present friend,

"ELIZABETH COBBOLD.

"To Margaret Catchpole."

The reader will ask: "What had poor Margaret Catchpole done to deserve all that?"

The Rev. Richard Cobbold says: "Margaret fed upon the contents of this letter." We wonder she ever had an appetite for anything else! Australian cousins, never fear that we shall jibe at you for your ancestors having—some of them—got into trouble with the powers that were! We look upon your forefathers as a "nation struggling rightly to be free," to quote the words of a great Prime Minister. When Mr. Rudyard Kipling wrote his "Flannelled Fools" poem

THE NATURE OF THE OFFENCE WAS THEN FOR THE FIRST TIME EXPLAINED TO HER.

some people think he rather allowed his pen to run away with him. One line we never can forget:

"Arid, aloof, unconscious, unthinking, unthanking, gelt."

Surely never were words so well fitted as those are to the stony-hearted, pig-headed race of uneducated animals that disgraced the magisterial bench a century ago! The breed, somehow, survives in the East of England. There are people in Suffolk who are still of opinion that that woman's letter to Margaret Catchpole is ladylike! Let us shake the dust of East Anglia off our feet. Advance Australia!

Margaret was again sentenced to death and again reprieved, this time to transportation for life.

We know we should not weary our readers did we follow close on the heels of Margaret Catchpole through all the changes and chances of her mortal life in the Australian colonies. She had escaped from England, and that was something to be thankful for. And it is a long lane which knows no turning. Margaret had fancied that the second string to her bow, John Barry, had gone to Canada. Not a bit of it! He had gone to Australia. What is more, he had made a fortune there, and had influence enough with the Governor to obtain Margaret's free pardon. At the age of thirty-eight—when a woman is in the prime of life, though pert little minxes may think she is then passée—Margaret married the man who would at any time in this story have given his right hand for her.

Poor down-trodden Margaret! Who can say that life has not its compensations? Her old employer in England asked permission to write Margaret's biography, a task which the Rev. Richard Cobbold actually performed. We will not be hard on the Rev. Richard. He has left us a vivid picture of the state of society in East Anglia a hundred years ago. It gives us an explanation for several other crimes which might have puzzled writers on ethics but for the biography of Margaret Catchpole.

And, Margaret, we respect you for your womanliness in refraining from giving Mrs. Cobbold a black eye; but we think that if you had paid more attention to what Job replied to some of his comforters, you might have found a text which would have given that female prig a lesson that would have done her and her family no end of good. But the lesson of the Rev. Richard Cobbold is "not for an age, but for all time." He has erected himself as a scarecrow more enduring than brass. Can he, in his own place, hear the voice of Justice shrieking, "Conspuez Cobbold"? We trust that there is some charity which protects him from his deserts.

William Cobbett's Antipathy to the Legal Profession.

"GRACIOUS heaven!" cried William Cobbett, who preferred to enlist as a soldier rather than follow the calling of an attorney, "if I am doomed to be wretched, bury me beneath Iceland snow and let me feed on blubber; stretch me under the burning line, and deny me the propitious dews; nay, if it be thy will, suffocate me with the infected and pestilential air of a democrat's clubroom; but save me, whatever you do, save me from the desk of an attorney!"

The Lawyer's Ruse to Get to Heaven.

A CERTAIN lawyer (if we mentioned his name his relatives would not credit it) having died, knocked at the gate of heaven, but was refused admission by St. Peter, with the curt remark, "No lawyers admitted." As the saint was closing the gate, the lawyer contrived to throw his hat inside, and was at once commanded by Peter to "come inside quickly and fetch it." In he went, whilst the gate-keeper held the portal open for him to pass out; but the wily lawyer refused to move, saying, "No, no, Peter; I'm in now, and you won't get me out so easily." And the saint, not being able to leave his post, was bound to let him remain—the only instance, we believe, in which a lawyer has succeeded in entering Paradise.

They Were All Rogues.

FOG, in his "Journal" (1737), tells us that there was a "passage reported of the Scottish King, James I., who, soon after his accession to the English throne, would needs be present in court while a notable cause was pleading. Those on the plaintiff's side having finished what they had to say, it proved so much to the King's satisfaction, that he cried out, 'It's a plain case!' and was going, when somebody said to him, 'Please do stay, sir, and hear the other side.' He did so, and the defendant's party made their case no less plain to his Majesty's conceptions; whereupon the monarch departed in a passion, crying, 'Rogues all! rogues all!'"

THE WAYS OF THE CRIMINAL

IX.—BURGLARS.

Some Stories of Portico Thieves.

A BURGLARY had been committed at one of the great mansions at Hampstead. The thieves had climbed the portico at the main entrance of the house whilst the family were at dinner, and had cleared all the valuables they could find in the bedrooms. The portico was a particularly easy one to climb. The walls were covered with a trellis-work, and a luxuriant creeper almost concealed the walls from view. Detectives inspected the house and looked at the portico, but were none the wiser. Then one of the officers grasped the trellis-work to demonstrate how easy a matter it was to scale the porch. The detective shook the woodwork, and something fell at his feet. The something proved a valuable clue. It was a piece of striped cloth, to which was firmly sewed a broken button. Another shake and another search and the missing piece of button fell from amidst the creeper.

With this to work upon, the detectives left, but their task was as difficult as that of looking for a needle in a bundle of hay. Accident, however, led them right. One of the officers at headquarters examined the bit of cloth, and then, more as an off-chance than anything else, mentioned that he thought a certain "croak" of his acquaintance had recently been wearing clothes of a similar pattern. The "croak" was searched for, and, when found, he was wearing an overcoat of striped cloth, and the third button on one side, together with a bit of cloth, was missing. The piece found by the detectives fitted the tear, the button was similar to others on the coat, and a sentence of penal servitude followed the arrest of the criminal.

Only the most accomplished burglars can hope to succeed as a portico thief. He requires wonderful nerve, must act often on the moment, and must be ready to meet almost any emergency. Unlike the burglar who works at midnight and has only to reckon with a sleeping family or the patrolling policeman, the man who enters houses by way of the portico has to guard against numberless risks. He is liable to meet with interruption at any moment, for though he may lay his plans with the greatest care, there is every chance that he may have overlooked something, or that some trifling incident will place him in the hands of his natural enemy.

So far as the marking down of a house is concerned, the portico thief works in exactly the same manner as the ordinary burglar. In addition, however, to gaining all the information he can as to the interior of the premises he intends to rob, he must acquire a very fair knowledge of the exterior. As a rule he only "operates" on mansions standing in their own ground, and thus some distance from a road. As a rule he works only in the winter. The long, light evenings of the summer afford him no chance of entering a house without being discovered, and as a rule in that period of the year the opportunity for plunder vanishes as darkness falls over the land.

The plunder which a portico thief sets himself to obtain is the jewellery of the lady of the house, or that of her guests—perhaps both if circumstances favour him.

And when he sets out on an expedition of this kind he first has to satisfy himself upon a number of things. First, he discovers the room in which the lady to be robbed dresses, and of course leaves her jewel case. Then he ascertains by assiduous watching the time the family go to dinner, how long the function lasts, and whether any of the servants are in the habit of visiting the upstairs rooms whilst the meal is in progress. In some country houses, in order to guard against robbers of this description, the servants who are not otherwise needed, regularly patrol the bed and dressing-rooms whilst the household are dining. Then, from a safe distance the burglar inspects the grounds, and finds out where the gardener keeps his tools and ladders, and whether or not he remains about after dark.

The absolute necessity for complete accuracy in these details may be gathered from the fact that the thief, as a rule, has but little over an hour in which to get everything ready, commit the robbery, and clear away with the plunder.

He must not be seen too often in the neighbourhood of the house upon which he has evil designs, for in country districts the stranger is looked upon with suspicion, and anything may happen if the robber draws the attention of the village policeman to his doings. The tools of the portico thief are not elaborate. As a matter of fact, he carries a smaller kit than any other class of burglar. They include a good bunch of skeleton keys, a handy little wrench, a few hundred yards of whipcord, a dozen or more small pegs of wood, some wedges, and a gimlet, more often than not a revolver and a light ladder made of three or four strands of whipcord twisted together, with rungs of the same material, and a couple of wooden rungs in addition to keep the sides stretched apart.

When his plans have been completed, the robber waits his opportunity. Before "marking the house" he has probably read in a society paper that on such and such a night Lord and Lady Dash will give a great dinner, at which the guests already in the house will be augmented by half the county. This is the night he is waiting for. The thief approaches the house soon after dusk, and by hook or by crook gets into the grounds, and carefully inspects the position.

Patiently he waits hidden in the shrubbery until dinner is on the table, and then with wonderful speed he prepares for his undertaking. First he produces his cord and pegs of wood, and rapidly he covers the lawn with a network trap. The string is run out about a foot or eighteen inches from the ground, and is fastened to trees, bushes, or anything else that is handy. The pegs of wood are also used, and serve a dual purpose. Whilst they help to support the cord, they show white in the gloom, and if the burglar is interrupted, he can beat a hasty retreat over the cord entanglements, thus leading his pursuers to their "destruction," shall we say, the warning pegs enabling him to escape the snares he has set for others. Some very careful burglars have even gone so far as to paint the wooden pegs with phosphorus, whilst one man who neglected a precaution of this kind forgot in the confusion of flight the exact position of his man-traps, and

Porch climbers.

fell a victim to his own carelessness, being pounced upon as he lay sprawling over a flower-bed.

When this work is completed, the burglar makes a reconnaissance of the room to be entered, and if all seems serene, goes off for the gardener's ladder. If no ladder is available, he proceeds to climb up the portico—an easy task in the majority of cases, for porticos are more often than not covered with ivy, or some other creeping plant. Once on the top, he pulls a pair of felt slippers, or a pair of short woollen socks,

over his boots, and enters upon the most hazardous part of his nefarious task. Sometimes he finds the window directly above the portico has been left open, but if it is closed, it is an easy matter to open it, and soon he is inside the house.

Outfit for laying wires to intercept pursuers.

Perhaps he lands in a corridor or in a bedroom. In either case he quickly makes for the room in which he expects to find his plunder. First of all he secures the door of the room, to guard against intrusion, the wedge and the gimlet being used in the method described in previous articles. To force a door with a wedge firmly fixed to the floor is no easy matter, and if anyone does try to enter the room there is for a minute or so no suspicion that there is a burglar inside, and the thief is given a chance of escaping. Having fastened the door, he throws open the window and unrolls his ladder ready for instantaneous flight. Then he proceeds rapidly to work. Drawers, bureau, and jewel-case are quickly rifled of their contents, and find a resting-place in his pockets. If he is satisfied with his haul, he at once vanishes down his ladder

A "leg-up."

and goes off across country, with the object of getting as far away from the scene of the robbery as possible.

Sometimes if the haul is a light one, and the thief a particularly daring specimen, he will visit other rooms in search of plunder, but as a rule the information which he gained before the burglary has been so complete that the thief rarely makes a mistake in the room selected. But, however accurate the information, the thief takes great risks. If the occupant of the room has forgotten anything, and sends a servant to obtain it, an alarm is only a matter of a few moments. It was a maid who gave the alarm in one of the most famous portico robberies in the annals of English crime. She noticed the door of a dressing-room open just after the family commenced dinner. Within a few minutes she passed the room again, and found the door shut. Trying it, she found it locked, and thinking this was suspicious, gave an alarm. There were four men in the robbery. A chase which lasted two days and nights followed. In this one policeman was killed and three others injured. Three of the four burglars, who were all armed with revolvers, were executed, the other man, who escaped, committed suicide in a New York police cell. It is a thrilling story, and one which is already in type, and will appear in a future number of this paper.

As a rule portico thieves work in gangs of three or four. There is so much to do before the robbery takes place, that it is almost impossible for one man to "work" with any degree of success. Three men, named Lyster, Burdett, and

"Jeames" and the burglar wires.

Clarke, were engaged in the well-known robbery at Muswell Hill—not the Muswell Hill murder of recent years. They attacked the house of a Mr. Atkins, and the daring with which they went about the robbery may be gathered from the fact that as a preliminary they stole a long ladder and carried it a considerable distance along the Muswell Hill Road to the scene of the robbery. People who saw them doing this looked upon them as honest workmen, and took no notice. They even passed a policeman, and probably carried their tongues in their cheeks as they did so. The trio, however, were a little too daring, and the noise which they made brought Mr. Atkins, junior, upon the scene. With extraordinary courage the young man attacked the three cowardly ruffians, who at once drew revolvers and fired at him. Mr. Atkins was severely wounded, but he stuck to one man, and assistance arriving, the three desperadoes were speedily overpowered. They were each sentenced to penal servitude for life.

A ladder once led to the detection of a portico thief. A policeman was patrolling a lonely road in a country district, and entered a park to inspect a stately mansion. A ladder leaning against the porch attracted his attention, and as it had not been there earlier in the evening, he decided to secrete himself and await events. A few minutes only had elapsed when the shaking of the ladder warned him that someone was upon it, and in due course the burglar came into view. The thief did not see the officer, but slowly continued his descent. All at once a crushing blow on the head stretched him senseless at the foot of the ladder. The constable, de-

ciding to take no chances, had brought his truncheon into play, and when next the burglar was able to evince any sort of interest in what was going on around him, he was in the charge room of a police station.

But there is a capital story of a similar incident which ended in quite a different manner. It occurred in one of London's fashionable suburbs, where policemen are few and far between. The officer in the story was slowly pacing his beat, when a man on a bicycle with a cheery "good night," passed him, and vanished down the road. The constable continued on his beat, and presently came upon the young man again. The bicycle stood just inside the gateway of the front garden of a villa. Its rider was busily clambering up the portico.

"What's the game?" said the policeman.

"That's all right," replied the young man. "I live here, and must have left my keys at the office. All the people are away, and this is the only way I can get in. Give us a leg-up." His suspicions lulled, the policeman complied with the request, and in a moment more the cyclist stood on the top of the porch. "How about the bicycle?" said the policeman. "I'll come down and bring it in," was the reply, and at once the young man, producing a knife, slipped back the catch of the window with surprising deftness, and clambered inside. In a few minutes he was downstairs and had the front door opened. "Sorry to trouble you," he said to the officer, and, handing him a shilling, took the bicycle inside and closed the door. The policeman heard the bolts shot into place and the chain adjusted, and went away, quite satisfied. He would have been a little less pleased with himself if he could have seen what was going on inside the house. The young man with marked skill set about ransacking the house from top to bottom. Quickly he made a handy parcel of all the valuables he could lay hands upon and, waiting until the policeman had passed the house again and continued round his beat, he opened the door, mounted his bicycle and was beyond pursuit in five minutes. Out of mere bravado he left the front door open, and it was an exceedingly astonished constable who found the house open. He was still more astonished when he went inside and saw the state of the place. Everything had been turned inside out, and loud were the curses which he showered upon the head of the absent cyclist. Inquiries next day revealed the fact that on the evening before the robbery a man answering to the description of the cyclist had called at the robbed house and knocked repeatedly. The attention of the next-door neighbour was attracted, and that lady volunteered the information that the occupiers of the house were away on a holiday and would not be back for a fortnight.

Guarding the rope ladder.

The burglar's task was plain sailing. How he must have laughed in his sleeve at the policeman.

A Warrior's Ignoble Fate.

THE AMBUSHED ASSASSINS.

"Serpents lie where flowers grow."

—Old Ballad ("The Spanish Lady's Love").

IN the "thirties" of the last century a cowardly and miserable crime was committed from motives of plunder, resulting in such insignificant gains to the heinous criminals who perpetrated it that one may well feel unmitigated surprise that anyone out of Bedlam should have risked life—or even liberty—for a sum which three or four days' honest labour of any kind would have enabled him to acquire.

It is a peculiar fact that in almost every locality you find certain men—or, more rarely, women—who seem marked by the hand of fate from early life for a criminal career. Some of our common every-day locutions express this in forcible if somewhat uncouth English. Such sayings as, "He has a hang-dog look," "He who is born to be hanged cannot be drowned," etc., etc.—these and similar expressions in our own and other tongues clearly evince the popular idea that there are folk born to fall easy victims to crime.

The first noticeable early trait of these Cain-branded folk is often one which their parents and others may view with leniency—that is, a strong indisposition for exertion. "Idleness," observes the philosophic German, Zimmermann, "is the great and cardinal sin of human nature, from which all other sins spring," and the Spaniards express the same idea in their popular proverb, "The devil tempts all other men; but the lazy man tempts the devil himself." Where the hobbledehoy does not love honest labour and is always looking out for a "short billet" for himself it is a moral certainty that he will, if a provincial, develop into one of those yokels who cluster around the town pump, quite happy that "no man him," or, if a townsman, spend hours in propping up a pub and dying for a "pint of four ale and a screw."

To the above category belonged four men, named William Roach, Samuel Fletcher, James Sams, and Thomas Taylor, who had just met outside the Barleymow beershop, Hertford, and each of whom, in a moody and despairing fashion, was feeling in his pockets in a chase after a possible fugitive twopence, which would have enabled him and his mates to slightly ameliorate the excessive aridity of their gullets by the irrigation thereof with a gulp of extract of malt.

We say "malt" advisedly, for in the dark and distant ages (1837-8), with which this veracious history has to do, malt was actually a main agent in the production of beer.

"Can't ye find the price o' a pint nowheres, Bill?" asked Samuel Fletcher.

"Nary brown, bor."

"Nor ye, Jimmy?"

James Sams shook his shock head sorrowfully.

"What's to be done, mates? I'm perishing o' drought."

"Case o' grin and bear it."

"That be hanged! Beer I must ha'!"

"Right ye are, mate! An' a bit o' bacca, too."

"Yes, I could wish that."

"Would the old gal let e'er a one o' us stick up threepence?"

This referred to the hostess of the Barleymow.

"See us hanged first!"

"I shouldn't much mind being hanged," remarked Fletcher, "if they'd let me quaff a gallon o' good beer—stingo, mind!—afore they strung me up."

"Don't talk like that, Sam; it gives me the horrors."

"I say, Bill, d'ye think I could borrow Bob Carlis's ferrets for an hour? I noticed plenty of bunnies in Ashton Spinney, and the old girl here would let us have a good many pints for a couple of cheap rabbits."

"Bob's had to scrag his beauties. Squire Martin's gamekeeper came down on him, and poor Bob had to kill the ferrets or lose his job."

"Cursed hard upon a poor man, I call it. Them wild annermiles are as much Bob's or yours or mine as they's squires's."

"In course! But the law says different."

"Cuss the law and them what made it!"

"Amen!"

"I say, bors!" cried James Sams suddenly, "I've got a notion."

"Out wi' it!"

"And arst him to lend one o' we half-a-crown."

"Don't you wish you may get it?"

"'Tis easy enow. One of us arsts—say Bill Roach. In coorse, Bennett says 'No!'"

"That settles it."

"No, it don't. We arsts again and again. He gets tetchy, and words get rough, with a few swears on both sides. Then there's a hustle, quite accidental, in coorse, and old Bennett's cash gets shook out o' his pocket. One of us picks up a half-a-crown, another, perhaps, a half-sovereign, and we borrows them."

"But that's plain stealing—robbery, Sam!"

"Not a bit o' it!"

"Confoundedly risky job!"

"Not at all!"

"Supposing we're pulled?"

PENSIONER BENNETT CREPT UP THE HILL.

"Why shouldn't we borrow some of old Billy Bennett's chinks?"

"You mean the pensioner?"

"In coorse!"

"What, that stingy old hunks? Catch him lending money! He wouldn't give away the parings of his nails."

"There are various ways of borrowing."

"What d'ye mean?"

"Well, suppose one of us—you, as you have the most slack jaw——"

"Thank ye, Sam!"

"No offence meant, Bill!"

"None taken, Sam."

"Well, this is the day on which old William Bennett, the pensioner, draws his bit."

"What then?"

"Now, supposin' we wait on him after he's got the rhino——"

"Well?"

"Well, suppose! They can't do much to us for borrowing the money."

"I vote it's risky, and I fear 'tis felony."

"White-livered chaps like ye deserve to go as dry as the great Sarah" ("Sahara," he meant).

"And, o' course, men who say they wouldn't mind being hanged if they could only have a gallon of good beer first are reckless enough for anything."

"Look here, mates," broke in William Roach, "I'm of Sam's opinion. Let's try the fake, at least. Perhaps old Bennett will lend us a half-crown if we ask him pretty."

"And if he will not?"

"Then we'll borrow, as Fletcher proposes."

"And get lagged!"

"Not a bit of it! We all hold to one story, if we should be copped."

"How'll that help us?"

"Every way. Bennett always drops in at the Hare and Hounds to have a half-pint before he goes home. He lends

us some money, and then charges us with having taken it—robbed him, in fact. We stick to our story, and say he was too drunk to see a hole in a ladder. But he was good-natured, and as we were out of work he lent us a shilling each. Thus, there will be our three words against an old hog whom everybody about here knows to be half dotty."

His words made a considerable impression on his companions. Why should they not borrow a trifle of senile, half-imbecile William Bennett, and return it to him when they got into full work somehow?

So it was agreed, and the trio sauntered off to the cross-ways some distance out of the town to wait for the passing of the pensioner on his way home.

The weary minutes passed over the thirsty, moody four; the still more weary hours passed also. They knew Bennett's habits well, and expected him early in the afternoon, and now it was verging into evening. Could he have gone by any other route?

It did not seem feasible, as any other way would have been a roundabout, and the old man was weak and feeble. Still, it was possible. So Fletcher, at the request of the others, betook himself to Bennett's cottage. The pensioner, however, was not there. Reassured, Fletcher hastened back and joined his comrades.

Almost at the moment the group heard the sound of heavy and dragging footsteps coming along the hard road, and old William Bennett hove in sight.

He was a very aged and very infirm wreck of a man. He had served his country well in various campaigns, had on his body many scars of honourable associations, and now, in his last years, was well reputed amongst his neighbours, his only peccadillo being fondness for a drop of beer on the days on which he drew his pension.

The four men dogged Bennett's footsteps as far as Mr. Thomson's gate at Tewen, when Sams said he could not go any further, as he was known about there, and feared recognition. The others reproached him with cowardice, but he would not go on.

As, supported by a stout stick, Pensioner Bennett crept up the hill to the gate against which the three men were lounging, Roach stepped forward, intercepted Bennett, and asked him for the loan of half-a-crown.

The favour was brusquely refused by the aged man.

Roach did not ask again, but Fletcher and Taylor successively did so. Exasperated, probably, by these repeated solicitations, the old man (who had had a glass) waxed angry, and answered roughly.

The three then hustled him and picked his pocket. The old man struggled gamely, and, when freed from their grip, Bennett fell heavily on the road, where he was subsequently found dead.

The trio of assailants, recking naught of this, went back for Sams, and they returned to the Barleymow and sat down to an orgie.

When they divided their plunder they found that it amounted to but a trifle a-head. Roach had eighteen shillings and the deceased's watch as his share.

The men were arrested on suspicion and committed to Hertford gaol, where they severally voluntarily confessed to the facts above recorded. They declared that at the time they had no idea of committing murder, or that the man was killed.

The jury, after a long trial, brought in a verdict of guilty against Fletcher and Roach and of acquittal of Sams.

After their conviction the two culprits, immediately after sentence of death was passed, relapsed into a most miserable state of mind, and the exhortations of the chaplain, who was unremitting in his attentions to them after their committal, entirely failed in bringing them to anything like a state of composure or preparation for the dreadful fate which awaited them.

Although so young, they were both well known to the police, and had both been imprisoned in Hertford and Chelmsford gaols for felony. When they were first taken into custody they treated the matter very lightly, and had, no doubt, all along entertained the idea that they would only be convicted of the robbery, and the result of the trial consequently completely overwhelmed them.

A petition was got up on their behalf, on the ground of the probability, under all the circumstances of the case, that the deceased was not killed intentionally, and that the culprits had no intention to destroy his life, but that their object was merely to rob him. This petition, however, ultimately failed of its object.

The execution took place at Hertford on the morning of March 14. As the fatal hour approached every place that could command a view of the drop presented a dense mass of human beings.

Shortly before eight o'clock the sheriffs arrived at the gaol. They found the culprits in the chapel, engaged in earnest prayer. They were quite calm and collected, and did not appear at all daunted at the near approach of death. Both culprits appeared very anxious to testify their gratitude to the governor of the gaol for the kindness which they had received from him.

While they were being pinioned by the executioner they appeared to be engaged in fervent mental prayer. This ceremony being performed, the culprits, accompanied by the clergyman, governor, sheriffs, etc., proceeded towards the scaffold. Roach walked up the ladder first, and when he was seen by the crowd his boyish appearance seemed to excite general sympathy. He looked at the rope, and then glanced at the crowd, and placed himself under the fatal beam.

Fletcher also walked up very firmly, and shook hands with his unhappy companion and then placed himself by his side. It was a melancholy sight to see two such youths—mere boys, in the prime of youthful vigour—about to be consigned to a premature grave. Many of those present could not refrain from shedding copious tears.

The executioner proceeded to perform his office. When he had placed the ropes round their necks, Roach begged the governor to shake hands with him once more for the last time. This was immediately done, and the governor caught hold of the pinioned hand and shook it heartily. The unhappy lad appeared touched with his kindness, and tears gushed from his eyes.

Fletcher then asked if he might be allowed to say a few words to the crowd. On being told that there was no objection to his doing so, he addressed the following sentence to the spectators in a loud voice: "All young men here take warning by my fate, and never play at cards or give way to idle habits, for that has brought me to this end."

Roach immediately afterwards said, "All you young men here take the same advice from me." He added, "By the blessed Jesus I am innocent of the crime of murder of which I was convicted, and I hope God will have mercy upon me."

This statement appeared to create an extraordinary sensation among the crowd.

The preparations were by this nearly completed, when Roach begged the chaplain to read the Lord's Prayer to him, which he did. Roach thanked him, and said he was ready.

An instant after the drop fell, and in a few seconds all was over. After hanging the usual time the bodies were cut down and put in shells, preparatory to their interment within the walls of the gaol.

There were persons present at the execution who came from the most distant parts of the country, and among them a great number of young females, apparently dressed in their holiday attire, and a stranger going in a contrary direction, and not aware of the occurrence that was about to take place, would have imagined that they were going to some fair or merry-making rather than to witness the taking away the lives of two fellow-creatures. At least one-third of the concourse of persons assembled to see the execution were females, and many of them of tender age. The awful scene appeared to have very little effect on this section of the crowd.

One name has disappeared in our narrative—that of Taylor, who was implicated in the transaction. Taylor absconded immediately after the occurrence, and was not apprehended until twelve months afterwards. He had enlisted in the 15th Regiment in an assumed name, and as that regiment was about to embark for India, Taylor was detected through a letter which he addressed to his mother. He was arraigned and sentenced to death, the consummation of which he met with very little appearance of apprehension or agitation.

The Lawyer's Degrees of Comparison.

THE celebrated criminal lawyer, Adolphus, said that in his time the judges admitted that there was a deal of truth in the following degrees of comparison in the career of a lawyer: Getting on; getting on-er (honour); getting on-est (honest).

"It Was Framed by the Lawyers."

WHEN Mr. Cleave was tried before Lord Lyndhurst, in the Court of Exchequer, he defended himself, and commenced his speech by saying that before he had finished his address he was greatly afraid that he would prove the truth of the old adage that "he who acts as his own lawyer has a fool for his client," whereupon Lord Lyndhurst said, "Oh, Mr. Cleave, don't you mind that adage; it was framed by the lawyers!"

THE RECORD OF ONE OF THE MOST BLOODTHIRSTY RUFFIANS OF THE LAST CENTURY.

THE TRUCULENT . .

Troppmann.

"Let us meet
And question this most bloody
piece of work,
To know it further."
—SHAKESPEARE, "Macbeth," Act II., Scene 3.

THE terrible cases of Knapp, in America, and Edwards, in our own country, have brought prominently before the public the awful homicidal mania which occasionally seizes people, and, searching through the pages of criminal history, we find that similar paroxysms have, from time to time, seized men. Neil Cream and Jack the Ripper are examples of this in England, while the truculence of the leaders of the great French Revolution can only be explained in the same way. All were possessed by the lust for blood, by homicidal lunacy. It matters not whether the method of causing death be the knife, poison, or the cord, the same spirit has actuated the murderer, and all must be regarded as of unsound mind, though for their very dangerousness they are not fit to live, and must be effaced from the earth.

But the case which we are now about to relate differs widely from those already cited. Here no reason could be found for the awful crimes committed by the criminal, save the one which he gave himself, "He wanted money."

It was about noon on the 20th of September, 1869, that a butcher's boy named Huck was strolling across the Champs Langlois—or, as we should call them in England, Langlois Fields—in Paris, after finishing his breakfast, which meal is eaten by our French neighbours about half-past ten or eleven. As he went along, lazily whistling, and looking out for anything which might afford him a little diversion—for butchers' boys are the same all the world over, and are all possessed with a hatred for work, or, at least, for exertion—Huck noticed that the ground at a spot which he was approaching had recently been disturbed.

Why anybody should wish to dig in the Langlois Fields he could not conceive, so with a pointed stick he proceeded to explore for himself. He had scraped away but a couple of inches of earth when he came on a piece of cloth. This he pulled, and found that it would not yield, so he continued his digging.

Very little further labour was necessary before he saw that the fragment of cloth was part of the clothing of a limb, and, groping in the soft mould, he could feel that he was touching what apparently was the leg of a human being.

Alarmed, the embryo slaughterman rushed off for the nearest police officer, to whom he said that he had found the leg of a man buried in the Champs Langlois. The gendarme followed him, and felt the limb, then sent the lad off to the nearest cottage for a shovel, while he guarded the spot. The boy was only too willing to have something to do with the police, and the customers, whose orders he had been sent to obtain, were speedily forgotten. In the meantime, other gendarmes, seeing one of their comrades mounting sentinel over a scratched-up plot of ground, joined him, and the usual throng of idlers swelled the group.

The spade obtained, a short time was needed to remove the loose earth, and then a fearful sight was laid bare. The outstretched body of a young man was seen, his throat badly hacked, and the remains mutilated. The face bore a tranquil look, indicating that the poor fellow must have been unconscious before the mutilation took place. From the position of the wound in the neck, added to the foregoing fact, it was clear that the injuries were not self-inflicted, but that a horrid murder had been committed.

The corpse was taken to the morgue, where it was soon identified as the remains of one Gustav Kinck. Telegrams were sent to the police throughout Paris, and, later, throughout the whole of France, and it was learnt that the family of Kinck lived at Roubaix, a small town about six miles to the north-east of Lille, on the very confines of Belgium.

Further inquiries showed that the last person seen with Gustav Kinck was a certain Troppmann, whose description was furnished to the detectives, and by them circulated throughout the whole of the gendarmerie of Paris and the provinces.

The detective department of the French police works quickly, though the process of the Gallic courts is slow, and only a few days elapsed before a gendarme met an individual on the banks of the Seine and asked him for his passports and his papers of identification, which every Frenchman has to possess, for he thought he recognised in the stranger a person who corresponded to the missing Troppmann.

The suspect refused to show his papers or to account for his movements during the past fortnight, so the constable took him into custody, and was walking him off to the nearest station, when his charge made a sudden dash and sprang into the river. Of course in a minute all was confusion, gendarmes rushed hither and thither shouting that a man was drowning, boats, lighters, and wherries put out from all sides in search of the missing man. One waterman, more skilful than the rest, guessed that the fugitive would be carried some little distance down the stream before he was able to rise to the surface, so instead of rowing to the spot where the captor was wildly gesticulating on the bank, he made for a place some distance down stream. Suddenly a small, black head rose panting above the surface, and gasping for breath. With a couple of strokes the waterman reached it, and soon had the dripping man in his wherry. When the bank was gained, the gendarme again had his prey in charge, more fully convinced than ever that the man was Troppmann.

As soon as he had been formally charged, he was taken to a cell and allowed to dry himself. First of all he denied

Sent the lad off for a shovel.

that he was called Troppmann, but later he admitted that such was his name, and told the police where they could find his clothes and his belongings, all of which, he said, he would want in prison.

Questioned as to his knowledge of Gustav Kinck, at first

he asserted that he had only once had him pointed out to him; and then admitted that he did know the family, but swore that he had not seen Gustav since the seventeenth of the month, which was strictly true, as will be shown.

Matters had reached this stage when the police of Paris were informed by their provincial colleagues that no trace of the other members of the Kinck family could be found, and that first Jean Kinck had disappeared, and later Gustav had gone to Paris, and was soon followed by his mother and a baby. This was communicated to Troppmann, who, recognising that "the game was up," confessed that he had slain Gustav.

Several days later he suggested that he might know something of the death of Jean Kinck. This necessitated the re-opening of the process, and gave the culprit more time. Then the police wanted to know where the body of Jean Kinck was lying, if he really had been murdered, so the prisoner told them that it would be found under a certain tree, in a wood near the Champs Langlois. The police went there, and found nothing. When told of this, Troppmann, who, strange as it may appear to our English ideas of police custody, was amusing himself with a magic-lantern, laughed, and said that he felt sure they must have looked under the wrong tree.

Off the police went again to search for a second tree which the prisoner had indicated, and again their search was rewarded with nothing, so they came back to the gaol and were a second time jeered at by Troppmann.

Thus rebuffed, they thought that it would not be a bad plan to take the prisoner out on the next searching party, so hand-cuffed, he was brought to the Champs Langlois. As he passed the place where Gustav had been buried, he glanced at it, remarking, "That's where one was!" Then they entered the little wood.

Troppmann looked round, scanned the various trees, walked a few steps forward, and said, "Here is the spot. Beneath this spreading tree." Spades and pick-axes were quickly at work, but no body was found. When the police were tired, the culprit laughed, and said, "I have made a mistake. It was that tree. This is where he stood." So again this wearisome digging had to be gone through, only to find no body after a deep pit had been excavated. Several times this manœuvre was repeated, the gendarmes getting more and more angry, but, since they were under the eyes of their superiors, not daring to administer the sound thrashing which Troppmann so richly deserved. At last one of them, more astute than his fellows, noticed a line of ravens flying towards a certain spot. Time after time they were disturbed, but they returned to the same place, hovering round and round, apparently in search of carrion. He watched these for some time, and then came to the conclusion that the birds had found the loathsome food which they sought, and were evidently afraid to alight. He pointed this out to his officer, and the police retired a little, when the ravens were seen to descend. Immediately the police rushed up and saw on the ground, which had evidently been recently disturbed, the marks of the birds' beaks where they had been poking into the soil in search of their disgusting meals. A smart little terrier was with the search party, and it immediately commenced digging and scratching in the ground.

A few moments later the body of Jean Kinck, in a horrible state of decomposition, was raised to the surface, for only a couple of inches covered it. Troppmann was led back to Mazas Gaol, where he was imprisoned.

Some little time passed before Troppmann thought fit to mention that he had also slain Mrs. Kinck and her baby, and their remains were eventually recovered and properly buried. All this took a long time, and it was not until the end of December that it was possible for the police to present Troppmann in the Court of Assizes for the Seine Arrondissement.

On the 28th of December, 1869, the Assize Court presented a spectacle which it has never before or since equalled. An upholsterer had been engaged to decorate the entire interior as if it were a saloon in the Hôtel de Ville. Coloured hangings, luxurious chairs, canopies, carpets, tapestry, all were used to make the chamber beautiful.

At an early hour, ladies, resplendent in the gaudiest of dresses, began to drive up to the doors, and were accommodated by the ushers with front seats. The demand for places was unprecedented in the annals of French courts of justice. To look at the court a moment before the entrance of the prisoner, one would have thought that the spectators had met to witness a play of Dumas's, or to hear an opera by one of the great masters. All the principal benches were crowded with ladies, gentlemen stood behind, and everybody was provided with opera glasses, the better to enable them to look at the wretched criminal.

Suddenly a movement is heard at the back of the court, and, heavily guarded, Troppmann is brought in to face M. Thevenin, his judge. The prisoner, on whom were focussed some hundreds of lorgnettes, was of a very miserable appearance. His build was slight, his features common-place,

A smart little terrier commenced digging and scratching in the ground.

with a small, straight nose and dark hair and eyebrows. His chest was fairly well developed, and his hands were very, even abnormally, large. This was the beauteous object which was more attractive to the Parisians of 1869 than the lovely works of art, the brilliant dramas, or the screaming farces to be found in the halls and theatres of the French capital.

In accordance with the procedure of French courts, little really remained save to take the depositions of the constables who arrested the prisoner, of those who found the bodies, and—since he had confessed—to listen to the prisoner's own statement and attempt to extract any more information from him.

The story of the police we already know, for we have followed them in their researches, but the statement of the culprit is interesting.

He said that he was born on October 5, 1849, and, therefore, was just over twenty years of age. He was the youngest of his family, who were all respectable, middle-class people. In March, 1869, he went to Dernay to visit his mother, and later in the month came to Paris. There he had no acquaintances, and was very lonely.

In one of the cafés he met a stranger, and, as is the custom abroad, got into conversation with him. Thus he describes it:—

"Your health!" said the stranger.

"Same to you!" I replied. "Are you from Alsace?"

"Yes."

"What is your business?"

"I am a mechanic."

"Excellent! So am I," I said. "To pass the time away, let's have a game of some sort."

To this the stranger agreed, and Troppmann and his future victim played dominoes for some little time. At last

they got friendly, and when the stranger rose to leave Troppmann proposed to walk part of the way to his hotel with him. On the way the chance acquaintance gave him his card, on which was inscribed "Jean Kinck, 22, Rue de l'Alouette, Roubaix," and asked him to come and visit him. This Troppmann did, and by skilful questioning discovered that he was worth at least a hundred thousand francs, or about £4,000.

The more he thought over this the more he wanted to obtain possession of it, and eventually thought out a plan. Keeping up his correspondence with Kinck, he requested the latter to meet him on the evening of the 18th August at six o'clock. Jean kept this appointment, and the two went for a walk together. Then Troppmann made a proposal to Kinck for a certain scheme (which was never divulged) by means of which both parties could make their fortunes in America in a few years, if Kinck would provide the money.

"Jean Kinck." Gustav, thinking that his father wanted him, came immediately to Paris, where he was met by Troppmann, who made some excuse for his father not coming to see him, and asked for the money. To his consternation he found that the young man had not brought it. Pointing out how very urgent it was that all the papers should be in Paris on the following day, and saying how vexed—possibly ruined—Jean Kinck would be if they were not forthcoming, Troppmann then persuaded Gustav to send a telegram to his mother at once in these terms:

"17th September. Arrived safe. You must come to Paris. Leave Roubaix Saturday night at ten and Lille at 4.18. Bring all papers with you. Gustav."

That done, the prisoner proposed that Gustav should see some of the sights of Paris before returning to his hotel. The young man agreed, and with his new friend went for a walk. When they reached the Langlois Fields Troppmann

SUDDENLY STRUCK HIM IN THE NECK WITH IT.

Jean Kinck was apparently a prudent man, for he did not at all appreciate the plan, and refused to advance the necessary money or to take any active part at all in the project. This result had been foreseen by Troppmann, and to smooth matters over he produced a bottle of wine and pressed his companion to have a drink. Kinck consented, and while pouring out the liquor, under the cover of the darkness, Troppmann contrived to pour a strong dose of prussic acid into the wine. Kinck drank it and died immediately. "I buried him on the spot in a thick wood under some shrubs," commented the prisoner. The next thing to do was to get hold of the money somehow, so Troppmann informed Mrs. Kinck by letter that her husband was detained on business. Then he applied at the post-office for letters and papers addressed to Kinck, but was refused them.

It was clear, therefore, that something else had to be done, so Troppmann wired to Gustav Kinck, telling him to meet him in Paris and bring the money, signing the telegram allowed his companion to get a little way in front of him, and, drawing from his pocket a large table-knife, suddenly struck him in the neck with it. Kinck fell insensible, but as he was not dead his murderer knelt on him for a short time and hacked him about with the knife. Thus the son was out of the way, and Troppmann had only to await the arrival of the mother with the necessary documents; so he buried the body and went back to his lodgings to prepare for the advent of Madame Kinck.

She came, as arranged in the telegram, and Troppmann made an arrangement to meet her in the Pantin Plain. He did so, and found that she had a baby and two other young children with her. Very affably he chatted to them till they got near the Langlois Fields, his favourite shambles, then he persuaded Mrs. Kinck to walk in front a little. She was carrying the baby, and asked where they were going to. Her "guardian" replied that he would soon show her, but that, as she had the infant, she had better walk a little in

front, as the path was rather narrow. This she did, and as soon as she had reached a site which Troppmann thought suitable, he struck her violently from behind with a long knife. She fell, but still struggled, trying to save her child. Again the knife was plunged into her and into the infant, who died instantly. The other children were easily settled in the same manner, and the whole lot interred in the murderer's usual fashion.

"Why did I commit these murders? Well, I wanted money. Kinck had not much, but it was better than nothing."

Throughout the whole trial, which, with the wearisome formalities of French procedure, lasted three days, the prisoner manifested very little interest until he was examined on his own confession. Then he brightened up, and took a savage delight in describing his awful crimes. At the close of his speech he had the consummate impudence to propose that, in future, the field where he buried his victims should be known as "Troppmann Cemetery"!

An effort was made to show that Troppmann was a homicidal maniac, but the doctors who had him under supervision declared that there was not the least trace of insanity about him, and that from his behaviour it was very clear that the desire for money was the sole motive which led him to commit the horrid crimes of which he was guilty. That being the case, there was nothing more to be done than to condemn him to be slain by the guillotine on a date to be fixed later on.

The trial over, Troppmann was taken back to Mazas Prison, and, a few days later, transferred to La Roquette, the gaol which till last year has been the last home of the Parisian murderer. As is the custom in France, no intimation is given either to the public or the culprit of the day when he will be required to pay the last penalty of the law.

On the morning of January 19, 1870, the warders who usually overlook the condemned in La Roquette entered the cell of the doomed, accompanied by—the governor? No. A priest? No; by a hairdresser! That worthy offered Troppmann a couple of cigarettes, and proposed that he should have his hair cut. The criminal turned pale. He knew that the hair-cutter only precedes the head-cutter in La Roquette. Still, he smoked his cigarettes while his last toilette was being performed. Then he had a short interview with his spiritual director, was introduced to M. Deibler, the executioner, and, under a strong escort, marched out of the prison into the public square of La Roquette, where the guillotine had been erected but a few hours before.

A moderately large crowd had assembled to witness his passing, but had there been the least idea of the date fixed previously the square could not have contained the populace.

Guillotining is a rapid process; no time is wasted. The culprit walks up to the board, a couple of straps are passed round his body, the board is lowered into its place, the priest whispers a word, M. Deibler pulls a small handle. All is over! The next instant the lifeless clay is bundled off the machine into a wicker coffin, which is transferred to a hearse, and the priest jumps into a cab and follows the remains to the cemetery. There, all that was left of the murderer was lowered into a grave, while the service was read; and, that done, was immediately raised again and taken to the anatomy schools.

Thus died Troppmann. So speedily was his execution carried out that, if the throng who assembled in the semi-darkness of that January morning had not been told that it was the notorious wholesale murderer that was suffering, no one would have had time to recognise him. His head is now in the Anatomy School of the University of Paris.

It is impossible to find the least excuse for Troppmann, and one can only rejoice that such a scoundrel has passed from off the face of this earth.

A SOLICITOR, whose nose and chin were both very long, and who had lost his teeth, whereby the nose and chin were brought very close together, was told, "I am afraid your nose and chin will fight before long, they approach each other so menacingly." "I am afraid of it myself," replied the man of law, "for a great many words have passed between them already."

A BARRISTER, crossing Moorgate Street on his way to the Guildhall, when crossing-sweepers did their work better than the Corporation to-day, was appealed to for the customary dole. The gentleman said, "I am going a little farther, and will remember you when I return." "Please, your honour," replied the man, "it is astonishing the credit I give in this way."

THE CRIME OF MRS. CAREW.

"The witch shall die."—SHAKESPEARE, "Antony and Cleopatra," Act IV. Sc. 10.

HOW A LADY OF GOOD SOCIETY POISONED A HUSBAND IN HAPPY JAPAN.

HERE resided at Yokohama, in Japan, in the year 1896, a young couple named Carew, who moved in the best English society of the place, and were much sought after. On October 15th of that year, Mr. Carew, who was the secretary and manager of the United Club of Yokohama (Rudyard Kipling's "Oversea Club") was taken ill with what he believed to be liver complaint. At his wife's desire, though against his own wish, his medical attendant, Dr. Wheeler, was called in, and treated him in the usual way in such complaints. Progress, however, was not satisfactory, and Dr. Wheeler found himself unable to account for some of the symptoms presented by his patient. On the morning of October 22nd the doctor was attending the funeral of a resident in Yokohama, and, while there, Mr. Dunlop, a local merchant, told him a strange story. He said that his children's nurse, a Miss Christoffel, had that morning informed him she had met Mrs. Carew's nursery governess, Miss Jacobs, coming out of a Japanese druggist's, and that Miss Jacobs, apparently in great distress, had said to the nurse, "I must tell Dr. Wheeler of this poison. If I do not speak now it will be on my conscience all my life should Mr. Carew die."

Whether this helped to explain to the doctor the condition of Mr. Carew or not, he immediately made preparations for having him transferred from his home to the Naval Hospital, but it was then too late, for Mr. Carew died the same day in the hospital from exhaustion due to acute vomiting and diarrhœa.

On the night of the death, Mrs. Carew, who, by the way, was a singularly pretty and somewhat frivolous little woman, said to the doctor, "There is one thing I would like to tell you, which, I suppose, you ought to have heard before. Mr. Carew had stricture, and asked me if I could get him a small bottle of arsenic. He also wanted some sugar of lead."

Dr. Wheeler refused a medical certificate, and accordingly, on October 24th, an inquest was opened, Mr. J. C. Hall, the British acting consul in Yokohama, being the coroner.

Before the court Dr. Wheeler described the course of the deceased's illness, and added that Mrs. Carew had urged him to secure the aid of Dr. Baélz, of Tokio, but being unable to get this gentleman in time, he had called in another practitioner. Both had made a post-mortem, but could find no lesion sufficient to account for death.

The evidence of Miss Jacobs put a new complexion on the case. She stated she had bought at a Japanese druggist's, on Mrs. Carew's orders, a bottle of Fowler's solution of arsenic and a bottle of sugar of lead upon October 21st, and that the shop-assistant referred to the quantity of deadly poison Mrs. Carew was buying, saying that she had bought arsenic on the two previous days. The assistant himself, when called, stated that he knew he had sold arsenic on the 19th, 20th, and 21st to a foreign woman, but was unable to identify Mrs. Carew when pointed out to him in court. He stoutly maintained,

however, that it was to someone from the Carews' that he sold arsenic on the 19th and 20th of October.

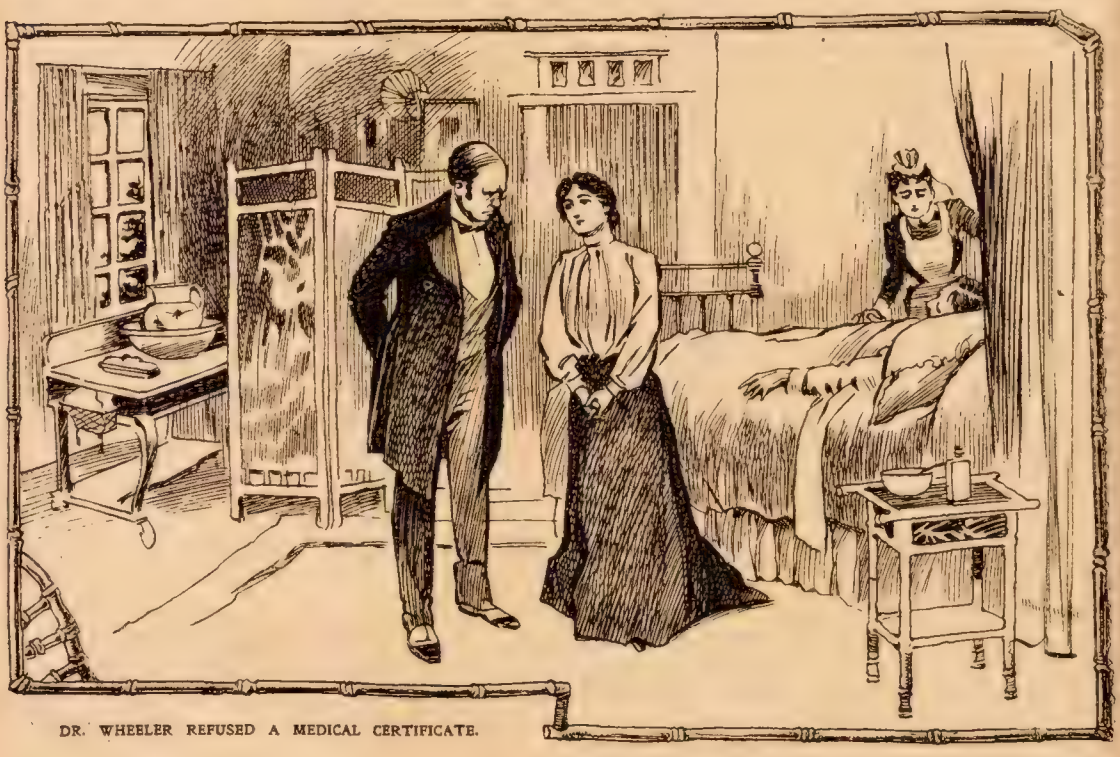
Dr. Divers, of Tokio, who had analysed the contents of the stomach, gave it as his opinion that Mr. Carew had died of poisoning by arsenic not administered by himself. There was also evidence that Mr. Carew, both in the Straits Settlements and in Japan, had been in the habit of dosing himself with arsenic.

Mrs. Carew, who was at this stage represented by counsel, went into the witness-box, and in substance stated that her husband had taken arsenic for years, and that she sent Miss Jacobs for the poison at his request. Only once did she send for arsenic for herself, and that was on Dr. Wheeler's prescription. Mrs. Carew then proceeded to tell the story of one Annie Luke, with whom her husband confessed to her he had had some relations prior to marriage. This girl was described as living in Devonshire. A female servant had previously given evidence of a strange woman, deeply veiled, calling at Mr. Carew's house during his illness, and while his wife was absent, and asking where Mr. Carew's bedroom

The coroner, in summing up, spoke of Miss Jacobs's evidence as "clear and unshaken," pointed out that Mrs. Carew was in sole charge of the nursing of her husband, and that the expert evidence showed it to have been impossible for the deceased to have unwittingly administered the poison to himself in a dose sufficiently large to have caused death. As to Annie Luke, Mr. Hall invited the jury to eliminate such a person altogether from their minds in connection with the tragedy.

The jury found that Mr. Carew died from arsenical poisoning, "but by whom this poison was administered there is no direct evidence to show."

Five days later Mrs. Carew was charged before Mr. Troup, British Consul at Yokohama, with the murder of her husband. During this investigation, which lasted many days, a new turn was given to the case by the statement of Miss Jacobs that, believing letters of her own which had not reached her were in Mrs. Carew's wastepaper basket, she had searched the latter four times before Mr. Carew's death, and had taken a number of scraps of torn letters, and had



DR. WHEELER REFUSED A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE.

was. Mrs. Carew went on to say that on October 10th a lady whom she did not know called at the house to see Mr. Carew, and on being told he was not at home refused to leave her name, but left a card bearing on it the initials Mr. J. and A. L., 1888. She had joked with her husband publicly about the veiled woman.

At this point of the proceedings a number of extraordinary letters, purporting to be signed by Annie Luke, were put in. They were addressed to the coroner, and to Mrs. Carew's counsel, Mr. Lowder. The following is a passage from a letter to the counsel.

"You will be acting on behalf of the wife of the man who was to me the world, and more than the world. Dead men tell no tales. No, nor dead women either, for I am going to join him. . . . For eight long, weary years I have watched and waited—waited till I knew he would get tired of her, that silly little fool. And then I came to him. What is the result? We, between us, electrify Japan." The writer spoke of the deceased as "my twin soul," and added, "As we were divided in life, we were not in death."

No strange woman answering the description of Annie Luke could be found in Yokohama, although there was evidence that Mrs. Carew had made inquiries at a steamer office in regard to her.

handed them to Miss Christoffel, who had sewn them together. The latter explained her conduct by saying, "I thought it would be useful to Miss Jacobs one day if it should come out that men were paying visits to that house not exactly in the form of house friends. I was afraid my friend's character might, in such a case, perhaps have to suffer."

The letters were from Mr. Dickenson, a clerk in the local branch of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, and they showed he was advising Mrs. Carew in proceedings she contemplated taking against her husband for alleged marital offences. On the day after these letters were produced by Miss Christoffel, they were, at his request, handed to one of Mrs. Carew's counsel by the officer of the court. When the envelope containing these and other exhibits in the trial were returned, one of the letters was found to be abstracted. The doors of the court were instantly closed, search was instituted, and finally a female searcher discovered the missing document in the crape cuff of Mrs. Carew's dress, that lady having been allowed to sit by the side of her counsel.

At the close of the inquiry the consul committed Mrs. Carew for trial on the charge of murder, and refused bail. She had been out on bail during the previous proceedings. A further application to Mr. Justice Mowat, of the Supreme Court for Japan, to release her on bail was refused, and she

was lodged in custody in the British Consular Gaol at Yokohama awaiting her trial.

The trial began on the 5th of January, 1897, but previous to that Miss Jacobs had been arrested on the charge of poisoning Mr. Carew. It was also alleged that she was the writer of the letters signed "Annie Luke." Before the magistrate Mrs. Carew's counsel, Mr. Lowder, required Miss Christoffel to write from dictation passages from the letters.

Miss Jacobs stated that she came from Somerset, and arrived at Yokohama in May, 1896, as Mrs. Carew's nursery-governess. Mrs. Carew was also from Somerset, and married Mr. Carew, who belonged to Cornwall, in 1889. They were in easy circumstances, and both seemed to have moved, and to have been popular, in the best circle in Yokohama.

The trial of Mrs. Carew excited the greatest sensation throughout Japan, and resembled in several points the Maybrick case, Mr. Carew's death being certified by the doctor, after the post-mortem examination, as being due to arsenical poisoning.

Mrs. Carew stated under examination that soon after marriage her husband told her he had been "amusing himself" with a girl named Annie Luke. Also that, after his death, she found among his papers a letter signed "Annie," urging that the writer must see him. She further said that while deceased was ill, there was sent to her a letter addressed to Miss Annie Luke, Post Office, Yokohama, in her husband's handwriting, making an appointment to meet the woman on the Bund. She then went on to state that before her husband died she had a short conversation with him on the subject of Annie Luke, and that he had expressed a desire to see the woman, and to make amends to her.

In the course of the trial, Dickenson, the bank clerk, was called as a witness for the prosecution, and several letters addressed by him to Mrs. Carew were read in court. They were couched in very affectionate terms, and urged the necessity for his correspondent to take steps to obtain an immediate divorce from her husband. In the course of his examination by counsel, Mr. Dickenson declared that Mrs. Carew had deceived him by alleging brutality on her husband's part.

The case for the prosecution closed on the thirteenth day of the proceedings, and before opening the defence a letter addressed to the British minister, signed A. L. Price, complaining of the coroner's summing-up, was produced, and was admitted to be in the handwriting of the accused.

In the meantime, much popular sympathy was felt for poor Mary Jacobs, who had been charged with the murder, and who stood remanded on bail. A public subscription was opened to defray the expense of defending her by counsel should she be committed for trial on the capital charge. The poor girl was completely prostrated, and unable to give evidence.

The trial of Mrs. Carew concluded on the 1st of February, 1897, having extended over four weeks, during which time the court sat twenty-one times.

The judge, in his summing-up, laid stress on the strong circumstantial evidence against the accused, and animadverted heavily on the terrible accusation brought against a girl then lying under the ban of a remand by a magistrate on the same charge as that which the accused had been arrested upon. It was not for him to say which he believed guilty, but a motive for the crime had been found in the one case, while there was none, so far as he could see, in the other.

After a long deliberation, the jury found the prisoner guilty, and she was sentenced to death; but that sentence was subject to revision. The unfortunate Mary Jacobs was, of course, liberated, to the great relief of her friends.

As has been already mentioned, the Carew murder resembles in many of its phases the notorious Maybrick case, and the chief points in the drama may be thus summarised.

Mr. and Mrs. Carew left England some few years before the tragedy for the quaint and picturesque country of Japan, with which Great Britain is now so intimately related. The gentleman was engaged as secretary and manager of the United Club at Yokohama, a very select and genial institution, immortalised by Mr. Rudyard Kipling. The lady was the daughter of a citizen of famous and historic Glastonbury, a Mr. Porch, who was, the year of his daughter's crime, mayor of his ancient borough. The Carews seemed to have lived fairly happily together, but the husband took to his bed, and died a lingering death. During his illness, letters were received from one calling herself his "soul-wife," and who announced her desire for his constant society here or hereafter.

The symptoms of the disease by which Mr. Carew had been attacked became very grave, and suggestive of mineral poison, and eventually he died. The doctor refused a medical certificate, and the evidence at the preliminary inquiry left some doubt as to whether the patient knew of the psychical epistles. Investigation showed not only that arsenic had been the cause of death, but that Mrs. Carew had almost exclusively mixed and administered her husband's food and drink. Arsenic was also traced, if not to her possession, at least to her household. At this interesting point a governess in the family was taken into custody, suspected of being the soul-wife, and consequently of having made away with Mr. Carew. Local opinion was strongly against the girl's guilt, and in the end she was acquitted, while the wife was condemned for what would, years before, have ranked as petty treason, and involved a death far worse than hanging.

In illustration of this, we give the following particulars:

Over three centuries before the Christian era eight score Roman ladies were publicly executed for poisoning their husbands, and in our own country it was so common a crime that in 1531 it was made punishable by boiling to death. That penalty did not stop it, for so late as 1850 the use of arsenic for the crime of poisoning obtained to such an extent that Parliament passed an Act placing obstacles in the way of its sale, the difficulty of getting it being further increased in 1868 and 1885. In 1884 two sisters were hanged for poisoning the husband of one of them for insurance money, and four years later a doctor in Cork was executed for poisoning his wife with arsenic. A short time back a woman was hanged at Melbourne for poisoning her husband, her children, and a lodger. But to find an emulation of the Roman crimes of over 2,000 years ago we must go to Hungary, where in 1882, twenty-five women were condemned for husband-poisoning in concert. This lesson did not prevent ten others being accused eight years later of poisoning their husbands with the fatal mineral.

In the Carew case the appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council resulted in a commutation of the sentence to penal servitude for life, and the prisoner was sent to this country to undergo her punishment.

It was very evident that local prejudice ran high against Mrs. Carew. The mystification of the soul-wife letters formed no mystery to the British colony in Japan. The arrest of Miss Jacobs was resented as an outrage, and the verdict was in accord with public opinion.

How to Treat Jurymen.

BUSINESS men of the present day grumble very much at being summoned to serve on a jury, and consider themselves very badly used, but their lot is light compared with that of the jurors in the times of Henry VIII. and some of the irascible monarchs who succeeded him. There is on record a case which was tried by the Lord Chief Justice of England in the early days of the reign of King Hal which will give us some idea of the way the judge despised the unfortunate men who were compelled to serve their country for nothing. The case had been very long and trying, and when the twelve men retired to consider their verdict they were heartily sick of the whole business. While revolving in their minds what to say, one of the jury produced some provisions, which he generously shared with his colleagues. Then they decided on their verdict and returned to court. Unfortunately, one of the ushers had informed Judge Reed of the impromptu supper, and before taking the verdict he fined the jurors very heavily. That did not end the matter, for, five years later, the Court of King's Bench was moved to quash the verdict on the plea that the jurors should have fasted until the case was ended. On this occasion the twelve victims engaged counsel to defend them, and it was declared that they had made up their minds before they ate, and that they had only done so because they heard that the learned judge had left the court to watch a dog-fight, and they did not know how long he would be. In the end the fines were confirmed and so was the verdict.

On another occasion the pockets of the jurymen were turned inside out for the benefit of the judge. To his disgust, every juror had several pippins in his pockets, and, seeing that some had more than others, inquiry was made, when it was disclosed that those with the least apples had consumed some of theirs. That was too grave a breach for the judge to overlook, and he severely reprimanded the jurors, fining those who had eaten twelve shillings each and the others six shillings a-piece for "wanting to eat."

THE ALTON MURDER OF 1867.

Being an Account of how FREDERICK BAKER, a lawyer's clerk and of good education and address, murdered a little girl of nine years of age in a hop field, for no sort of motive whatever.

"A man may smile and smile and be a villain!"
—SHAKESPEARE, "Hamlet," Act I. Sc. 5.

THE red-stained history of great crimes discloses many instances in which the most appalling deeds have been done for motives that must appear wholly inadequate and trivial to the normal mind. Men have dyed their hands in blood for the sake, not of the less ignoble passion of jealousy or revenge but of a few shillings or for the possession of a few paltry articles of jewellery or wearing apparel. Such cases we have become accustomed to, since, like the poor, they are always with us, and, except to the student of the dark side of human nature, they have attracted no more than passing wonder, attention, and disgust.

But there are also cases in criminal records in which no sort of motive, however slight and obscure, has ever become apparent, and amongst these the celebrated "Hop Field" tragedy of 1867 stands out pre-eminent.

There have been murderers, atrocious murderers, and—Mr. Frederick Baker! To that young man belongs a special infamy of which none of his successors in the paths of crime are ever likely to deprive him. He stands alone, prominent in the world of villains, a very monument of depravity and horror.

We shudder at the mention of his commonplace name to this very hour. He was a monster as rare and as abnormal as the Jekyll and Hyde of fiction. He had none of the milk of human kindness, a drop of which at least is generally to be found in the lowest and the worst specimens of humanity. There we meet him in the corridors of Time, and we know that he stands apart and alone: a thing from which his fellow-sinners would turn with loathing.

In the year 1867 a firm of solicitors named Clements had a place of business at the pretty little town of Alton, in Hampshire. The place and its inhabitants were then, as now, mainly devoted to brewing interests, and Alton ale has always been a very excellent beverage. Capital facilities for brewing good beer exist in Alton and the neighbourhood, and the town, pleasantly situated some few miles from Winchester, was famous for its hop-fields even before one of them secured an unenviable notoriety.

Several clerks were employed by the Messrs. Clements aforesaid, and amongst them was one Frederick Baker, a young man twenty-nine years of age. He had been in the employ of these solicitors for some twelve months before the eyes of the whole country were turned in horror upon the spot where he resided. His work as engrossing clerk was always well done, and he bore a very fair general character with his employers and the inhabitants of Alton. Although occasionally given over to fits of melancholy and depression, he could be very genial at times, and no one guessed or dreamt of the nature of the monster who moved about so freely in their midst.

In appearance there was nothing strange about him. He was rather an ordinary-looking young man, of medium height, stoutish, dark, and clean-shaven, with little about him to attract attention from passers in the street. The brand of Cain was not exhibited in young Mr. Baker's non-committal countenance.

There also resided at Alton at this period a workman of the name of George Adams. This man had a large family of children, one of whom, a little girl named Fanny, was nearly nine years old. On Saturday, August 24, 1867, this child, together with her sister Lizzie and two or three other companions of about her own age or a trifle older, went for a walk after dinner, and early in the afternoon found themselves in a meadow near the hop-fields. They were spoken to there by a man, whom they had seen on the previous Saturday, and who joined them in their innocent play and gave them some halfpence. The man was Baker, the lawyer's clerk from Alton.

The band of children returned home in due course, with the exception of Fanny Adams, who was missing, and Mrs. Adams, becoming alarmed at the child's absence and at certain vague statements about a strange man made by the other children, instituted a search for the lost child about half-past five o'clock.

One of the children had described Baker as a man who had gone away with Fanny Adams across the hop-fields at about half-past one, and the rumour flew about that the child had come to some harm, although it is not clear that there was any particular cause for suspicion at that time, and it was not till a quarter to eight that night that it was clearly established by the finding of the child's body that murder had been done.

Before it became dark a labourer named Thomas Gates undertook to thoroughly search a certain hop-garden to which it was said Baker had been seen leading or carrying the missing child. To this man it was left to make the most frightful discoveries.

First he found, near the hop-fence, a portion of a girl's frock, covered with blood, and a second or two later he was sickened to observe, laid out on two poles, the head of a child. It had been roughly cut from the trunk and presented a truly horrifying appearance, for the eyes had been wilfully plucked from the sockets by the murderer and the right ear had been torn away with savage force from the head. A few yards farther the appalled and frightened man found a leg and a thigh, and fifteen yards from the sightless head he stumbled on the trunk of the body, a still more gruesome spectacle, for the stomach had been cut open and cleaned out, the bowels and heart now being picked up a little farther on.

The strong man nearly fainted at these hideous things, and little wonder. No wild and savage tiger, thirsting for blood and hungry for flesh, would have so torn, distorted, and mutilated its prey. Other parts of the body were recovered on the next day and the day after, and on Tuesday, the 27th, a police-constable named Joseph Walters discovered a human eye in the centre of the river, near the bridge, in ten inches of water. The other eye was found on the same day, about 700 yards from the scene of horror in the hop-garden. On Sunday, August 25, a man named William Walker, a painter, searched the hop-garden, and he observed a sharp stone covered with blood and hair and small pieces of flesh, near the spot where the head was found, and it was with this implement that the unfortunate child was actually killed. It may be said here that other portions of the body were missing, and the details in regard to them cannot be given here, so painful are they, but the medical evidence tended to prove that no criminal assault had been attempted, and the prisoner, in his subsequent terrible confession, swore that the thought of outrage had never entered his mind. Of motive for his bestial work Frederick Baker had none.

By eight o'clock the news of the discoveries in the hop-field had spread abroad, and the town was in a perfect frenzy. Baker was already suspected, inasmuch as he had been seen loitering in the vicinity of the scene of the crime, and had made overtures to the children. His own manner was not reassuring, and it was known that he was not at the office about the time that the horrors of the hop-garden were being perpetrated. But it may be as well to trace his movements and to describe his arrest, as was subsequently shown at the examinations and the trial.

Minnie Warner, a child of eight years old, was one of the companions of poor little Fanny on that sad afternoon, and when the latter could not be found she gave the following account to the child's distracted mother of what she had seen. She said that while they were at play a man came up to them and said, "Ah! my little children, here you come again!" He played with them innocently enough for a little while, and distributed some halfpence amongst them. He picked some blackberries which they could not reach for them, and at length told Minnie Warner and Lizzie Adams to go home, while he lifted Fanny up in his arms and carried her towards a hollow. He said to the little girl, "Come with me and I will give you twopence more," but the child cried,

it seems, and wanted to go home with her companions. He went with Fanny into the hop-ground, and then Minnie Warner and Lizzie Adams ran home to acquaint their mothers, it being near tea-time.

It should be mentioned here that Baker was seen, either with the children or near them, watching them at play, by several persons, including one Eliza White, who noticed him smoking by a stile about that time, a William Allnork, who observed him near the gate of the hollow at about two o'clock, and George Noyce, a shepherd, who saw him coming away from the hop-field at three o'clock. When Baker saw this man he put his hands, which seemed to contain something, hurriedly under his jacket and walked rapidly away.

Later in the afternoon Mrs. Adams went to search for her child with a Mrs. Gardener, and they took the little girl Warner with them. They saw a man, dressed in dark jacket, light trousers, and a tall hat, come out of the gate leading to the hollow, and Minnie Warner identified him at once as the man who had taken Fanny away.

Mrs. Gardener stopped him and asked:

"What have you done with the child you took away?"

THEY WERE SPOKEN TO BY A MAN WHOM THEY HAD SEEN ON THE PREVIOUS SATURDAY.

He said he had taken no child away, but admitted giving coppers to some children, and added that he often did so.

Mrs. Gardener asked him his name, and he replied, "Never mind my name; you will find me at Clements', at Alton." The woman begged his pardon and he walked off, proceeding towards the old toll-house on the Basingstoke Road. He was quite calm and gentleman-like, and bowed politely when Mrs. Gardener apologised for accosting him.

Baker, according to the testimony of a brother clerk, got back to his office at about six o'clock, and at seven he and this clerk, a man named Biddle, crossed the road from Mr. Clements' house, and went to the Swan tap. Baker at this time seemed as if he had been drinking. He was a little excited because, he said, some women had accused him of decoying away a child, and he added that if the child had been murdered, perhaps he would get the blame for it. He declared that he should leave Alton altogether on the Monday following, and asked Biddle to go with him.

The two clerks stayed at the Swan till about eight, and on getting back to the office a baker named Doggerell came in and told Baker that the people were saying he had murdered a child. To this he replied that he was innocent, but in any case it was a bad job for him. By eight o'clock all knew of the awful discovery in the hop-field, and before half-past eight the superintendent of police at Alton, Mr. William Chiney, called at the office of Messrs. Clements and saw the man Baker, who was rather excited, standing with his hands in his pockets and his hat on. Cheney asked him if he had heard of the murder, and he said, "They say it's me, don't they?" The reply was, "Yes, you are suspected," at which Baker said, "I am innocent, and willing to go where you like." He handed over two knives, on one of which there was a little blood, and then the superintendent took him formally into custody. When searched he had £1 6s. 1½d. in his pockets, and it was noticed that the left leg of the trousers and his left boot and sock were quite wet, while spots in the trousers leg appeared to have been washed. The wristbands of his shirt were stained with blood, and he appeared unable or unwilling to account for it. He also said, "I don't see how I am to get off, it all seems so straightforward; but I am innocent."

On the Monday morning a remarkable piece of evidence was brought to light which excited a great deal of curious comment at the time. The prisoner was in the habit of keeping a diary, and when this book was found in his desk an extraordinary entry was down for the day, August 24, in handwriting which Baker admitted to be his. The note in question ran, "Killed a young girl. Fine and hot." This was a damning admission indeed, the more so since it was easily proved that the prisoner had written it in the diary some hours before the murder became known. On being confronted with this written statement the prisoner said he remembered writing it, but was intoxicated at the time he did so.

The trial of Baker took place at the winter assizes at Winchester, before Mr. Justice Mellor, on December 5, 1867, the counsel for the prosecution being Mr. Bere and Mr. Bullen, while Mr. Carter defended the prisoner, who seemed, however, quite indifferent to his fate. As a matter of fact, he had almost half confessed on several occasions when interrogated about the crime, but his family felt keenly the disgrace attached to their name through the hideous guilt of Baker, and determined to do all they could to prevent the odium and stigma of having had a near relative hanged becoming attached to them, and it was early known that insanity would be the main hope of the defence.

The evidence called on behalf of the Crown established the fact that Baker had been seen with the child at about the time the murder was committed; that she was never seen alive again after being carried by him to the hollow near the hop-field, and that he was quite unable to account for his wet boots and the many stains of blood found upon his clothing. The other clerks at the office proved that he was in and

out all day, and that from one till three-thirty and again from four-thirty to six the prisoner was absent from the office. As a matter of fact, the hop-field must have had some weird fascination for the murderer, for he certainly returned to its vicinity after the crime had been committed. The counsel for the prosecution, too, naturally made much of the "confession" found in the diary.

Mr. Carter addressed the jury on behalf of the prisoner. After adverting to the serious difficulties and responsibilities of his position, he said the defence would present two aspects. In the first place, he should rely upon a criticism of the evidence, convincing the jury that his client could not be guilty, and he should produce evidence before them as to the state of the mind of the prisoner, showing that he could not be held responsible for his acts. Could they believe that the small knife produced was the instrument with which all that hacking and hewing of flesh and muscle and bone had been committed? But if that was the instrument, then it clearly showed absence of premeditation. Where was there any evidence of motive? There was nothing to show any. It was said the entry in the diary was a confession of guilt. What was it? "Killed a young girl. Fine and hot." But

Minnie Warner identified him at once.

it might have been merely the record of a young girl having been killed. Place a comma after the word "killed," and the entry would bear a quite innocent construction. There was also an entry of a child having been drowned in King's Pond, but they could not therefore infer that the prisoner had drowned the child. As to the words "fine and hot," they could not apply to the enjoyment felt by the prisoner in killing a girl, for they were found in the diary no less than 164 times.

The diary showed that the prisoner attended church at least twice every Sunday, and his mild manners and pleasant bearing had been noticed by everyone. The counsel went on to say that they had to rely a great deal on the evidence of the child, Minnie Warner, and yet it was clearly proved that she was mistaken as to points of time, and might have been mistaken upon other parts of her testimony. Mr. Carter then read different portions of Mr. Taylor's work on medical jurisprudence to show that most motiveless murderers were insane, and concluded by saying that he could prove that insanity existed in the prisoner's family.

Frederick Baker, senior, the prisoner's father, then gave evidence. He stated that the prisoner was always a very weakly child; his health and nervous system were always bad, and he had a violent attack of fever when he was sixteen. He was a clerk in the offices of Messrs. Smallpiece, the solicitors, at Guildford, but he disappeared in April, 1865, and he did not know where he had gone. He used to watch his son, as he feared he would commit suicide.

Mary Ann Baker, the prisoner's sister, gave similar testimony, and John Davis, a Guildford constable, described some extraordinary conduct on the part of the prisoner. His manner was restless and excited, and he was continually in the habit of walking about all night. He had threatened suicide.

Dr. H. C. Taylor, a surgeon at Guildford, said he had attended the prisoner's family. Baker was a very sickly child. He had had an attack of typhoid fever. Four years before the prisoner's father had had an attack of acute mania. He was violent and had delusions, and once attacked his son and daughters, being under the impression that they were endeavouring to poison him. Witness had placed him under restraint. Had remarked a great change in the prisoner's manner; always looked upon him as having a weak mind, which would be rendered worse by the hereditary taint in his family. Homicidal mania, the doctor added, was a desire to kill someone without motive.

Mr. Justice Mellor summed up with strict impartiality, and expressed no sort of opinion as to the sanity or insanity of the prisoner, but he admonished the jury that there must be no compassion in their verdict, inasmuch as three courses lay before them—either to find the prisoner "guilty," "not guilty," or "not guilty on the ground of insanity." He reviewed the evidence at some length, and then dismissed the jury, who were only absent fifteen minutes. They returned with a verdict of guilty, and the prisoner was sentenced to death, the judge expressing his concurrence in the verdict.

Baker flushed a little, but heard his dreadful doom with some show of indifference, and was removed, protesting his innocence to the last. But nearly all were prepared for a full confession, and it speedily came.

The prisoner became very depressed while awaiting the execution of the sentence, and at length he unburdened his conscience and related the main details of his revolting crime.

Asked what possible motive there could be for such brutality, he declared that an irresistible desire to slay came over him when the child cried at being taken away from her companions, and that he killed her with a large stone. The mutilation was an after-thought. He felt that he must become saturated with blood, and that he experienced no natural horror or repulsion while engaged in this revolting work of decapitation and disembowelling. He stated that he had walked about for some time with the heart, smoking hot from the child's body, in his hand, but that he had thrown it into a field (where it was found) when he heard someone approaching. He had also had the poor child's eyes in his hand when passed by the shepherd, Noyce, who had noticed him hide his hands underneath his jacket, and added that he threw them in the water from the bridge.

He expressed great sorrow and sympathy for the parents of the child, and begged for their forgiveness. Little or no effort was made to obtain a revision of the sentence, and this fiend underwent the penalty of his crime shortly after the trial at Winchester, many thousands being present at his execution. He showed much fortitude at the last, and said that he deserved his fate.

Although there must have been something quite abnormal about the mind of this slayer of innocence, there is no real reason to believe that he was not responsible for his actions or that he did not know the difference between right and wrong. He took to drink heavily some three years before the murder, and bore a very indifferent character at Guildford, at which town he had lived for several years. He had been greatly distressed at the loss of his sweetheart, who had broken off her engagement with him owing to his own loose conduct, and he wrote that young lady some very pitiful letters after his removal to Alton. He had been a member of literary institutions at Guildford, was secretary to a debating society, director of a savings bank, and a Sunday school teacher for twelve years, so that it is difficult to believe that the monster was actually mad.

But strange and appalling specimens of humanity appear, like baleful shadows, across our paths at times, and we can only wonder at them and shudder as they pass us by.

COURTS of Justice took their rise from a court established in the palace of William the Conqueror.

COUNT D'ORSAY used to say that no gentleman having the slightest pretension to fashionable consideration can be seen out of doors except on a Sunday, as on that day bailiffs and other low people keep at home.

BRUNELL
... OF THE ...
'BELL' INN.

A SINGULAR STORY OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

"The law is a hass."
—DICKENS, "Oliver Twist."

IN the year 1742 a case of a very remarkable nature occurred near Hull. A gentleman travelling to that place was stopped late in the evening, about seven miles from the town, by a single highwayman with a mask on his face, who robbed the traveller of a purse containing twenty guineas. The highwayman rode off by a different path full speed, and the gentleman, frightened, but not injured, except in purse, pursued his journey. It was growing late, however, and being naturally much agitated by what had passed, he rode only two miles farther and stopped at the Bell Inn, kept by Mr. James Brunell. He went into the kitchen to give directions for his supper, where he related to several persons present the fact of his having been robbed, to which he added this peculiar circumstance, that when he travelled he always gave his gold a peculiar mark, and that every guinea in the purse taken from him was thus marked. Hence he hoped that the robber would yet be detected. Supper being ready, he retired.

The gentleman had not long finished his supper when Mr. Brunell came into the parlour where he was, and, after the usual inquiries of landlords as to the guest's satisfaction with his meal, observed, "Sir, I understand you have been robbed not far hence this evening?"

"I have, sir," was the reply.

"And your money was marked?" continued the landlord.

"It was," said the traveller.

"A circumstance has arisen," resumed Mr. Brunell, "which leads me to think that I can point out the robber. Pray at what time in the evening were you stopped?"

"It was just setting in to be dark," replied the traveller.

"The time confirms my suspicions," said the landlord.

He then informed the gentleman that he had a waiter, one John Jennings, who had of late been so very full of money and so very extravagant that he (the landlord) had been surprised at it, and had determined to part with him, his conduct being every way suspicious; that long before dark that day he had sent out Jennings to change a guinea for him; that the man had only come back since the arrival of the traveller, saying he could not get change; and that, seeing Jennings to be in liquor, he had sent him off to bed, determining to discharge him in the morning.

Mr. Brunell continued to say that when the guinea was brought back to him it struck him that it was not the same which he had sent out for change, there being on the returned one a mark which he was very sure was not upon the other, but that he should probably have thought no more of the matter, Jennings having frequently had gold in his pocket of late, had not the people in the kitchen told him what the traveller had related respecting the robbery, and the circumstances of the guineas being marked. He (Mr. Brunell) had not been present when this relation was made, and, unluckily, before he heard of it from the people in the kitchen, he had paid away the guinea to a man who lived at some distance, and who had now gone home.

"The circumstance, however," said the landlord in conclusion, "struck me so very strongly that I could not refrain, as an honest man, from coming and giving you information of it."

Mr. Brunell was duly thanked for his candid disclosure. There appeared from it the strongest reasons for suspecting Jennings, and if, on searching him, any others of the marked guineas should be found, and the gentleman could identify

THE PURSE CONTAINING EXACTLY NINETEEN GUINEAS.

them, there would then remain no doubt in the matter. It was now agreed to go up to his room. Jennings was fast asleep; his pockets were searched, and from one of them was drawn forth a purse containing exactly nineteen guineas. Suspicion now became certainty, for the gentleman declared the purse and guineas to be identically those of which he had been robbed. Assistance was called, Jennings was awakened, dragged out of bed, and charged with the robbery. He denied it firmly; but circumstances were too strong to gain him belief. He was secured that night, and next day taken before a justice of the peace. The gentleman and Mr. Brunell deposed to the facts upon oath, and Jennings, having no proofs, nothing but mere assertions of innocence which could not be credited, was committed to take his trial at the next assizes.

So strong seemed the case against him that most of the man's friends advised him to plead guilty and throw himself on the mercy of the court. This advice he rejected, and, when arraigned, pleaded not guilty. The prosecutor swore to the fact of the robbery, though, as it took place in the dusk and the highwayman was in a mask, he could not swear to the person of the prisoner, but thought him of the same stature nearly as the man who robbed him. To the purse and guineas, when they were produced in court, he swore—as to the purse positively, and as to the marked guineas to the best of his belief; and he testified to their having been taken from the pocket of the prisoner.

The prisoner's master, Mr. Brunell, deposed as to the sending of Jennings for the change of a guinea, and to the waiter's having brought back to him a marked one in the place of one he had given him unmarked. He also gave evidence as to the discovery of the purse and guineas on the prisoner. To consummate the proof, the man to whom Mr. Brunell had paid the guinea, as mentioned, came forward and produced the coin, testifying at the same time that he had received it on the evening of the robbery from the prisoner's master in payment of a debt, and the traveller, or prosecutor, on comparing it with the other nineteen, swore to its being, to the best of his belief, one of the twenty marked guineas taken from him by the highwayman, and of which the other nineteen were found on Jennings.

The judge summed up the evidence, pointing out all the concurring circumstances against the prisoner, and the jury, convinced by this strong accumulation of circumstantial evidence, without going out of court brought in a verdict of guilty. Jennings was executed some little time afterwards at Hull, repeatedly declaring his innocence up to the very moment of his execution.

Within a twelvemonth afterwards, Brunell, the master of Jennings, was himself taken up for a robbery committed on a guest in his house, and, the fact being proved on trial, he was convicted, and ordered for execution. The approach of death brought on repentance, and repentance confession. Brunell not only acknowledged he had been guilty of many highway robberies, but owned himself to have committed the very one for which poor Jennings suffered.

The account which Brunell gave was that, after robbing the traveller, he had got home before him by swifter riding, and by a nearer way; that he found a man at home waiting for him to whom he owed a little bill, and to whom, not having enough of other money in his pocket, he gave away one of the twenty guineas which he had just obtained by the robbery.

Presently came in the robbed gentleman, who, whilst Brunell, not knowing of his arrival, was in the stable, told his tale, as before related, in the kitchen. The gentleman had scarcely left that apartment before Brunell entered it, and there, to his consternation, heard of the facts and of the guineas being marked. He became dreadfully alarmed. The guinea which he had paid away he dared not ask back again, and as the affair of the robbery, as well as the circumstance of the marked guineas, would soon become publicly known, he saw nothing before him but detection, disgrace, and death. In this dilemma the thought of accusing and sacrificing poor Jennings occurred to him. The state of intoxication in which Jennings was gave him the opportunity of concealing the money in the waiter's pocket, and so devoting an innocent man to the scaffold.

The case made a considerable stir at the time, much sympathy being evoked for the unfortunate Jennings, who had been wrongfully convicted, sentenced, and executed. The more advanced thinkers being averse to the hanging of men for any crime short of murder, an agitation was got up, but it eventuated in nothing, and nearly ninety years elapsed till execution for theft was abolished. Much has been changed since those days, and there are many persons now who believe that capital punishment should be done away with altogether.

"The very worst use you can put a man to," said a noted humanitarian, "is to hang him," and it has been admitted by even some of our judges that capital punishment does not act as a deterrent; yet what is the law to substitute for it? In some quarters it has been proposed to establish the American system of degrees of murder, and this would seem to be the most sensible innovation it is possible to make, for everybody must allow that a crime committed in hot blood is entirely different from such cool and deliberate murders as those of Chapman or of Neill Cream. It would only be just that a hundred murderers should escape scot free than that one innocent man should perish. In many instances the Scottish middle verdict of "not proven" is a perfectly fair one. Murder is a crime which must, of course, be committed in secret, and therefore the proof must be mainly circumstantial. We have quite recently had the Peasenhall case before our minds, when two separate juries refused to convict, and if this should lead to some amendment of the law in relation to circumstantial evidence we should not be at all surprised. Many people decline to believe that Mrs. Maybrick was guilty, and say that if she had been tried in Scotland she would have been permitted to go on the ground of insufficient evidence.

It is to be trusted, then, that not alone from the chance of condemning a wrong party, but from general motives of humanity, except in cases of the most fiendish character, capital punishment will ere long be numbered among the extinct barbarisms of a past age, and other and more rational means adopted for maintaining the integrity of the law and the peace of society.

We have abolished hanging for sheep-stealing, horse-stealing, highway robbery, forgery, and a hundred other offences; let us, then, abolish it for murder, save in such instances where the crime is of the most flagrant description and the proof absolutely incontrovertible.

Trying Dumb Animals.

UP to a comparatively recent period on the Continent domestic animals were in all respects amenable to the laws. Domestic animals were tried in the common criminal court, and their punishment on conviction was death. Wild animals fell under the jurisdiction of the Ecclesiastical courts, and their punishment was banishment and death by exorcism and excommunication. The researches of French antiquaries have brought to light the records of upwards of a hundred processes against animals tried in their courts from 1120 to 1740 A.D., when the last trial and execution—that of a cow—took place. Of such executions recorded we may notice that of a bull for killing a girl, of a boar for slaying, and of another for killing and eating a child. The first and third cases came from the Low Countries and the second took place at Macon, in Burgundy.

In the year 1457 a sow and her six little ones, at Lavegny, were charged with the heinous offence of having murdered and partly eaten a child. The sow was found guilty and condemned to death, but the piglets were acquitted on account of their youth, the evil example of their mother and the absence of direct proof of their having actually partaken of the dead child! In 1266 a pig was publicly burned at the stake in Paris for having devoured an infant. At Falaise a learned judge condemned a sow to be mutilated in its leg and head and then to be hanged for having lacerated and killed a child. The sentence was carried out in the square of the town, the pig being dressed in man's clothes for the ceremony! Horses come off a little better than do pigs, but we find that at Dijon one was executed for having attacked a man and killed him. But perhaps the most amusing of the whole list took place at Basle. In a crowded court, three solemn judges sat to hear the awful crime laid at the door of a cock. The charge was nothing less than that of having laid an egg! After much argument it was decided that the cock had so misbehaved itself, and it was condemned as a sorcerer. Next day the offending rooster, together with its egg, was solemnly burned at the stake in the market-place, the troops standing to arms as if for the execution of a human being. The Ecclesiastical Courts did not kill the bodies of the wild animals charged before them, but they contented themselves with outlawing them and killing their "souls" by excommunication, though the very divines who pronounced these ridiculous sentences would have cheerfully burned any man who said that the beasts had souls.

Criminal Problems

HOW TO PREVENT CRIME—HOW SHOULD PRISONERS BE FED?

THE subject of the treatment of prisoners while under the care of the Government is one which has a great deal to do with the efficacy of our present system, and, indeed, must be the point on which all considerations for the betterment of our gaol regulations will assuredly turn.

Every citizen has a perfect right to demand that those who have transgressed the laws of the land and have been sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment shall be kept in the best possible state of physical fitness. It would be absurd for anyone to propose that prisoners should be pampered, but it is only common wisdom for us to exact that the unwilling guests of the Government shall be maintained in health. This is for two reasons. In the first place it is impossible for one to get effective work from a sickly prisoner. Modern conditions demand that every able being who is incarcerated in one of our gaols shall do a certain amount of work per day, and common economy ordains that such work shall be remunerative. More than this, the prisoner has to earn sufficient to enable the authorities to pay him or her a small gratuity when leaving the prison, for to turn a penniless person adrift on the world would be to place a premium on crime at once.

This being so, it is clear that in the interests of the whole community the better the prisoner is able to complete his task, the more able his body is kept, the better for the whole State.

Can this be done under existing conditions? Are the present regulations efficient? This is a point which we have to consider.

Wherever there is a cast-iron rule there is always inefficiency, and, though the best country as regards our penal laws, we have that cast-iron rule. Anybody who has had the least experience of prisoners will tell you that those who serve their time in the country prisons have better appetites, but that, at the same time, they are able to "make more use" of the food which they receive than those who have to be incarcerated in the dismal gaols around London. The vitiated air which the metropolitan prisoners have to breathe is apt to diminish the taste for food and at the same time to impair the capacity for hard labour. Therefore, it is essential, in the interests of the State, that those who have to suffer punishment in central prisons in large towns should be supplied with more nourishing food than those who have an ample supply of pure air in the country.

But, you will say, if we feed our prisoners better you will put a premium on crime, for it is notorious that even with the existing scale the average convict is better fed than the honest pauper, whose only fault is his misfortune. That is a misconception: no amount of increase in the prison dietary will affect the criminal. He will never enter the gaol for the purpose of being fed; scanty dinners have no terror for him; the sense of restraint and of compulsory labour suffice to punish him, and, even if you were to supply him with restaurant meals, he would not willingly lose his liberty. The disparity between the feeding in prisons and in workhouses is simply a disgrace to the Boards of Guardians, and proves that those fattened gentlemen have not even the wisdom of the gaol authorities.

To the least reflective it will be apparent that the supply of food necessary to enable a strong prisoner to perform a severe physical task and at the same time to preserve his strength, which, by the way, is an asset of the Government, must differ vastly from that which a consumptive man, engaged in the tailor's shop of a gaol, will require. Nevertheless the regulations are adamant, and the navvy must receive exactly the same quantity, and no more, that is meted out to support the life of the delicate mat-maker. The "hard labour man" finds that his strength is daily decreasing, he craves for extra food, and he has to resort to petty pilfering to obtain an adequate supply.

Should this be pointed out to any of the sapient authorities they look at the various messes which have to support the convict's life, if strong stomached, taste them, and then say that they cannot conceive how anybody can eat even the stipulated quantity of the unappetising dishes. These wise gentlemen have, probably, never been hungry, have never experienced that fierce demand for food which at times compels convicts to eat candle-ends, cart-grease, putrifying Russian tallow, and such-like nauseous matter to allay the cravings of their unappeased appetites. If we want to get the maximum of work from those whom we have to keep we must supply them with food sufficient to enable them to do effective service. The increased output would more than pay for the extra food required.

At present it is considered bad policy to give convicts much meat, possibly for fear of exciting their animal passions too strongly, and the "savage creatures" are tamed on a skilly made from crushed Indian corn, with a little—very little—oatmeal stirred into it. This diet is totally inadequate for the purpose of keeping a man up to his full productive point, and even this is restricted during the first few days of prison life, when the mental depression, the solitude, and the change demand that he should be better fed than usual. If the food is to be curtailed at any time, let it be done just before the criminal leaves gaol, so that no effective part of his strength is lost to the State, and he has a wholesome distaste for gaol fare to take with him into the free world again.

More than this, in dealing with the healthy scamps, the governor should have authority to regulate the food of the convict to the class of work which he is doing. The present system is based on the minimum which will keep a man employed in sedentary work in health; it does not take into account the necessities of those who have heavy physical labour to perform, nor the peculiarities of the individual. We do not advocate a separate kitchen for each prisoner, but we do suggest that the quantity of food supplied should be proportionate to the requirements of each individual. A schedule could be easily constructed, and the extra trouble would be amply compensated by the extra output.

The second reason for feeding our criminals better is this: by half starving the offenders—notably those who are women—we lay the seeds of disease in them, and sooner or later we have to support them in the gaol infirmary, where they are allowed every luxury which the doctor may order. In the long run it would be found far cheaper to feed them reasonably from the beginning than to have to face the regular hospital bill which each prison presents yearly.

Having thus seen that it is in the interests of the ratepayers to feed our criminals better, what are the changes which should be brought about? The staple article of diet at present is bread. The quality of that supplied to prisoners could not be inproved; it is pure, wholesome, and extremely nourishing, but where the convict is employed on laborious tasks the quantity allowed should be increased, with permission to eat a portion of the doles at times intervening between regular meal hours. This would not entail any extra trouble on the part of the warders, and would help to keep up the physique of the workers to the maximum standard.

Next, the suet pudding which is served in prisons is far too heating for men in confinement, and does not supply much nutriment. It would be far better for the community at large if it were dispensed with and an extra meat day added to the weekly routine.

As to the meat, the present rule admits solely of a species of stew, which is called "boiled beef." Were baked beef and baked or boiled mutton put on the prison menu the change would be for the ultimate benefit of the public. It is a puzzle to every observer why the Government considers the only official meat to be indifferent beef.

Another reform, and one which could be effective, would be to abolish the use of anything but oatmeal for the manufacture of "skilly." This is not for the benefit of the criminal alone, but from the present nauseous mixture the best working power cannot be obtained, and those who have to pay the bill for the support of our delinquents have the right to demand that the fullest possible benefit shall be obtained from the unwilling guests. These suggestions are the result of conversations with several prison experts.

Answers to Correspondents

The Editor will be pleased to answer any suitable questions.

X. M.—Jonathan Wild was born in 1682, at Wolverhampton.

YANKEE.—Guiteau, who assassinated President Garfield, was hanged on June 30, 1882.

ASCOT.—It was Dennis Collins who attempted the life of William IV. at Ascot races on June 10, 1832.

W. V. H.—The early numbers are out of print, but you can obtain all the material bound, in the form of the first quarterly volume.

HOOK.—We shall give the life and doings of John Thurtell in a coming number. He designed his own gallows and was hanged at Hertford in 1824.

B. E. T.—The famous Madame Tussaud died on April 15, 1850. You are wrong in your second question. The exhibition is now carried on by a company, and not by her sons.

ATHENS.—The Greek executioner is a reprieved murderer who lives in solitude on the island of Nauplia, being brought to the mainland only when his services are required.

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